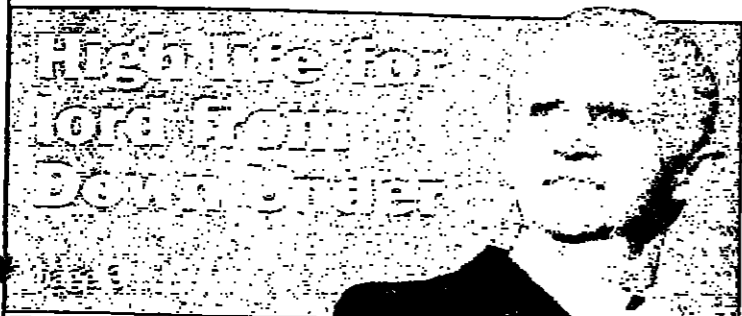




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Why Labour's new women won't make it

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STOCKING FILLER: 20% OFF WHITTARD'S TEAS & COFFEES PAGE 37

Welfare reform is top Cabinet priority

By Philip Webster, Political Editor

THE "something for nothing culture" will come under attack from Tony Blair today as he tries to prevent the battle with the House of Lords overshadowing his second parliamentary programme.

The Prime Minister intends to make welfare reform and modernisation of the public services the Government's central priorities for the coming year, and the Queen's Speech will contain about 20 Bills that will attempt to reassert Labour's reforming credentials, including a promise of a new welfare state "building on the principles of work for those who can and security for those who cannot".

The welfare Bill, which at one time was thought doubtful for the coming session, is now one of the weightiest and most controversial measures. It will prevent all benefit claimants, including lone mothers and the disabled, receiving payments unless they have turned up for job interviews, and it will target benefits for the long-term sick and disabled on those who need them.

The Government believes that many people now receiving state help should be in work, but knows that its efforts to reduce dependency on the welfare state will be met with fierce opposition.

The Bill will also include the first stage of a reform of the pensions system, paving the way for a new "stakeholder" pension.

The programme will also include legislation to scrap the 800-year-old voting rights of hereditary peers and a resubmitted Bill to introduce proportional representation for the next European elections, the Bill defeated by peers last week.

But while the media and the Tories might see Lords reform as the most important element of the Queen's speech, Mr Blair has told Cabinet ministers that, for the country, the centrepiece would be the

health, crime and welfare Bills that tackled "the everyday priorities of their everyday lives".

While the Lords Bill will be supported across the Labour Party, the welfare measure will be opposed in some quarters. Mr Blair, who will foreshadow what he will call "a year of challenge and a year of reform", has said that it will be controversial "but it is right".

He told the Cabinet last week that it would represent a fundamental reform of the welfare state, that it challenged the "something for nothing culture", but that it would at the same time provide real security for those in need.

Mr Blair's ordering of priorities reflects the concern in the Government about the high profile given to its constitutional battles. Ministers believe that Conservatives will try to keep the spotlight on the Lords and while they accept that it will be one of the biggest stories of the next year, they will be trying to get the public to concentrate on other areas.

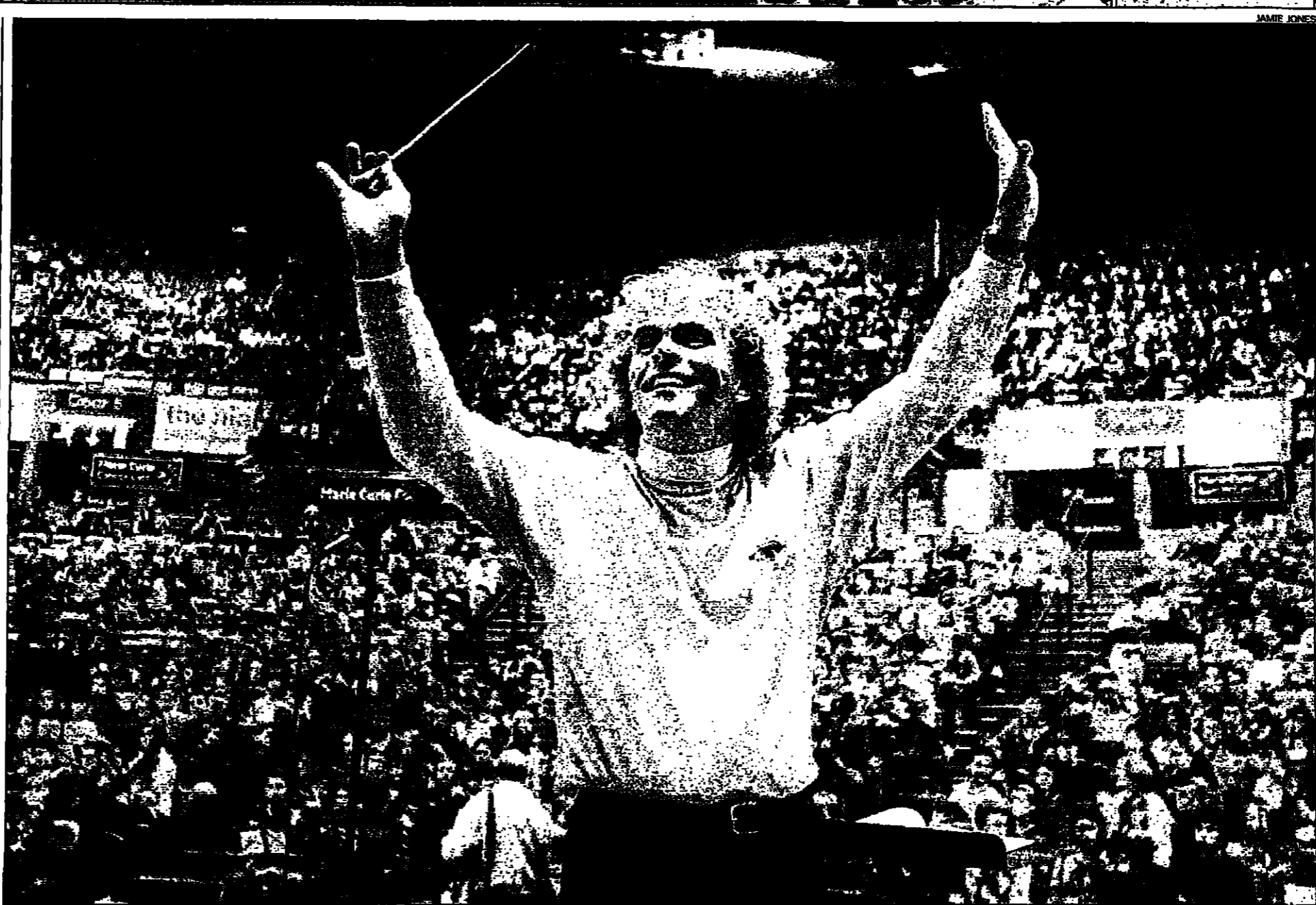
Senior government sources last night highlighted three measures in particular. Frank Dobson's health service Bill will abolish GP fundholding, send hit squads to failing hospitals, and provide stringent new powers to dismiss incompetent medical staff. Jack Straw's anti-crime Bill and John Prescott's local government Bill as measures that would have a big impact on people's lives.

John Prescott's local government Bill will end universal council tax capping, and replace compulsory competitive tendering with a requirement to get best value for money. However, his plans for elected mayors will appear only in a draft Bill and will have to wait at least another year to be enacted.

Jack Straw's crime Bill will modernise youth courts and give greater protection to vulnerable witnesses.

Mr Blair will say that the public services face a year of challenge. With the Government having promised an extra £40 billion for hospitals and schools, the services had to respond with matching reforms. Last week he told ministers that the programme would show that the Government could combine enterprise and fairness — and that a competitive economy and just society could be developed together.

Labour sources claimed last night that only a handful of the Government's 170-plus manifesto commitments had not been implemented or time-tabled.



Sir Simon Rattle and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra with their young accompanists as they beat the record for the world's largest orchestra yesterday

Rattle conducts 3,500 players into record books

By Peter Foster

SIR SIMON RATTLE accomplished two ambitions close to his heart yesterday when he conducted 3,500 children to claim the record for the world's largest orchestra.

Two years ago he failed to beat the existing record after an 11th-hour ruling from the Guinness Book of Records that his group of more than

2,000 musicians had fallen 11 seconds short of the required five minutes' continuous playing time.

But yesterday an ensemble collected from youth orchestras all over Britain played a rousing, if rowdy, rendition of Sir Malcolm Arnold's Little Suite No 2 lasting 7 minutes and 40 seconds. The 79-year-old composer was present to hear the performance.

At the same time the company

raised more than £30,000 for the Marie Curie cancer hospice movement, which looked after the conductor's father, Denis, as he died from cancer in 1996. "It was a deeply touching moment," said Sir Simon, plainly exhausted from his exertions after the performance. "It is difficult to say what this means."

After nearly two hours of rehearsals the orchestra, assembled on

banked seating in a vast hall used for filming the *Gladiators* television series, composed themselves for their record-breaking attempt. "Just remember to keep your eyes glued on me," said Sir Simon. "If there's a car crash I'm probably the only person who can get you out."

In the event 1,042 violinists managed to avoid a cacophonous collision with 125 horn players, 546 clarinet-

tists, 115 oboists, 58 tuba players, 77 bassoonists, 142 viola players, 85 double bassists, 144 assorted percussionists, 551 flautists and 377 trumpeters.

Sir Simon shepherded the orchestra while performing a tip-toe ballet. Five independent adjudicators reported back to the Guinness Book of Records authorities who confirmed the record, previously held by 2,212 players of the Kent Music School.

Yeltsin holds bedside talks

Boris Yeltsin held a 40-minute meeting with President Jiang Zemin of China in Moscow's Central Clinical Hospital.

The Russian President had been admitted suffering from pneumonia and is expected to spend up to ten days in hospital. The Kremlin said his temperature had been stabilised by antibiotics. Pages 11, 19

Germans take over Yardley

Yardley, which fell into receivership in August, has been sold to the German hair care and cosmetics group Wella.

Wella promised to invest in the brand, which has been promoted by Helena Bonham Carter and Linda Evangelista, and to set up a London office to develop it. Page 27

Hostel stabbing

A female social worker for Wandsworth council aged 51 was stabbed to death while visiting a client at a hostel in Baltham, south-west London. A 26-year-old man has been arrested.

It's over: British beef to go on sale abroad again

FROM CHARLES BREMMER IN BRUSSELS

AFTER the slaughter of 4.4 million cows, a £4 billion bill for the taxpayer and ruin for hundreds of farmers, British beef should be back on sale abroad early next year.

EU farm ministers effectively lifted their export ban last night — nearly three years after the embargo was imposed at the height of the scare over Creutzfeldt-Jacob disease. But continuing German opposition means that it will be left to the European Commission to pronounce a formal end to the ban next week.

Germany voted against allowing British beef back on to world markets, while France, Belgium, Spain and Luxembourg abstained. Italy moved from abstention in the last vote to join the nine others who backed an end to the ban.

Nick Brown, the Agriculture Minister, said: "It is a very good day for us, but it is a better day for the European Commission. It has played fair by Britain." Ben Gill, the

National Farmers' Union who was in Brussels for the vote, said: "It is the best Christmas present we could have."

Mr Brown acknowledged that continuing suspicion of British beef plus a worldwide glut on the market would make it hard to find customers



"How am I meant to remember where we put the passports?"

for a trade that used to earn Britain £700 million a year. "Consumers across the European Union are putting questions on food safety. You can't blame them for doing so."

Mr Brown praised the co-operative spirit of Britain's EU partners and said: "The climate has changed enormously since the government was elected." It is widely accepted that the Government's honeymoon with Europe helped to forge the political will among other governments to support Britain in the face of often hostile public opinion and local farmers. EU officials believe that John Major's 1996 "beef war" of non-co-operation stiffened some countries' resolve to maintain the embargo.

Franz Fischler, the EU Farm Commissioner, said that the end of the ban was not just a question of science. "It is a psychological problem and a political problem."

Mounting cost, page 4

Summer wine country is vintage Britain

By Mark Henderson

THE moors, hills and dales of North Yorkshire and Northumberland are the best places to live in Britain.

A Times analysis of the Government's new "quality of life barometer" announced yesterday, shows that the towns and villages of the north-eastern counties score top marks for everything from jobs and air quality to wildlife and schools.

In contrast, the borough of Knowsley in Merseyside seems to come off worst. It languishes at or near the bottom of the table for a range of feel-good indica-

tors, including education, unemployment, rubbish recycling and life expectancy. Its river, the Alt, is cited by the Environment Agency as one of the most polluted in the land.

The new measures of "sustainable development" merge traditional economic benchmarks such as Gross Domestic Product and unemployment rates with the quality of the local environment. Good schools, abundant wildlife and clean air are as important for high marks as booming employment. The rural and provincial areas of the North East do well across the board. North Yorkshire makes the top five in the

country for GCSE results and low unemployment, and summer smog — a measure of air quality — is low.

Castle Morpeth in Northumberland recycles more domestic waste than anywhere else and multiple car ownership, an indicator of congestion, is the lowest in the country.

The skylark population, which has plummeted across the rest of Britain, thrives in the region. The North East also has some of the cleanest rivers in the country — the Wharfe, the Tyne and the Tees.

Knowsley's scores, however, are a tale of misery. Its unemployment rate

of 17.7 per cent is worse than anywhere except Liverpool.

London throws together some of the best and worst places to live. Barnet, with one of the highest life expectancies, and Sutton, with good schools, are matched by poor scores for Camden, Hackney and Tower Hamlets — possibly the runner-up to Knowsley in the misery stakes.

Other blackspots include Liverpool, central Manchester, and Glasgow, while Surrey, Somerset, Cambridge and Hertfordshire are also winners.

12-point guide, page 5

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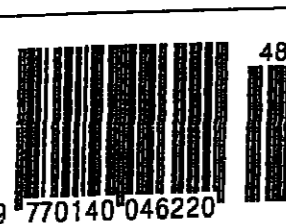
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Cost of the beef ban keeps mounting

Destruction of cattle must continue as producers try to woo back export markets, Michael Hornsby reports

A HUGE mound of meat and bone meal, the ground-down remains of thousands of slaughtered cows, is piled in a disused aircraft hangar near Grantham in Lincolnshire, a mute memorial to the cost of the beef ban. A total of 340,000 tonnes of such material is being kept at 12 locations round Britain and 70,000 more tonnes are being added to the stockpile every year. It will continue even after the lifting of the beef export ban.

Fibrogen, a power generator, has been awarded a contract to burn 255,000 tonnes over three years to produce electricity but the company still needs planning and environmental consent.

The waste came from some 2.7 million cattle slaughtered after May 1996 because they were more than 30 months old and regarded as a greater BSE risk than younger animals. Destruction of the older cattle will continue indefinitely because the lifting of the export ban only applies to beef from cattle between the ages of 6 and 30 months.

Altogether, 4.45 million cattle have been destroyed since 1988 because of BSE. Of those, only 174,000 were actually confirmed to have been infected with the disease. The others were culled as a precaution.

Among those destroyed were 1.5 million animals for which no commercial market could be found. Normally they

would mostly have been exported live for veal. Because the export of live cattle is still banned, their slaughter will continue at least until the spring, when it will be reviewed by the Government.

As part of the deal on lifting the ban, the Government must also destroy a further 12,000 cattle that are the offspring of cows that died of BSE.

The National Audit Office estimated in July that the cost to the taxpayer of government measures to combat the BSE over the 24 months to the middle of this year at £2.5 billion. About 60 per cent of this was compensation to farmers forced to slaughter cattle. Most of the rest of the cost was accounted for by extra subsidies to farmers and assistance to the rendering and abattoir industries. By 2001 it is estimated that the extra public expenditure will have risen to more than £4 billion.

Britain faces a tough battle to recapture foreign markets, despite the decision to ease the 32-month-old export ban. The Meat and Livestock Commission, the government-appointed quango that promotes meat consumption, believes that Britain would be lucky if beef exports had returned to 10 per cent of their pre-ban level by the end of next year.

Thousands of pamphlets are to be sent to media organisations, consumer groups, wholesalers and retailers



A hangar at Grantham holds part of the 340,000-tonne stockpile of meat and bone from animals destroyed as a precaution against BSE. A further 70,000 tonnes are added each year

across Europe to explain the measures that have been taken to make British beef safe.

The first beef is not expected to leave Britain much before March next year because EU inspectors will have to satisfy themselves that abattoirs processing the meat are complying with all the conditions set for the lifting of the ban.

In 1995, the last full year before the ban was imposed, Britain exported 242,000 tonnes of beef worth £518 million and

earned a further £79 million from the sale abroad of live cattle, mainly calves for veal. The great bulk of this trade was with the rest of the EU.

Some 80 per cent of beef previously sent to France, which took 43 per cent of all UK exports, came from old cows slaughtered at the end of their working lives, and was used mainly in processed and manufactured meat products.

"Our aim is to get exports back to something over 20,000

tonnes by the end of next year," Terry Lee, head of exports at the MLC, said. "That would be about 10 per cent of the former level."

"We will be concentrating on the quality end of the market and part of our task will be to reassure other EU countries that we will not be flooding them with cheap beef, even if that were possible given the current strength of sterling."

"By next March we hope to be selling beef again to hotels

and restaurants in Italy, which was always a good market. It will be harder to persuade retailers and supermarkets on the Continent. Outside the EU, South Africa, which imported £24 million of UK beef in 1995, is keen to resume imports but is hampered by the collapse of the rand."

The promotional leaflet produced by the MLC, *British Beef Returns*, details all the changes made by the UK beef industry to satisfy European

preconditions for re-entry to the export market. The A4 leaflet, which is available in all major European languages, explains how the lifting of the ban will work and assures customers that no beef will be exported from Britain until full inspections are carried out by European officials.

The European Consumer Organisation, which represents consumer bodies across the EU, said that confidence in British beef was still low. "The

general feeling among consumer groups on the Continent was against lifting the ban," Joanna Dober, a spokeswoman, said. "On the Continent it is still the belief that BSE is very prevalent in the UK."

In fact, the number of new cases of BSE this year is not expected to exceed 2,100, compared to more than 36,000 six years ago. Scientists believe there will be no more than a few hundred a year by 2001.

Currie calls for compensation for the victims' families

Inadequate ministers 'caused deaths', reports Michael Hornsby

EDWINA CURRIE called for government compensation to relatives of BSE victims yesterday, saying that people had died because of inadequate action by ministers.

Appearing before the BSE inquiry, the Tory former Health Minister said: "I would hope that the inquiry might at some stage turn its mind to compensation for the individuals concerned. I feel that more people became ill, more people became infected and more people died because of inadequate action by government ministers over a long period of time."

"To me, that is a classic case of compensation and we have compensated people in similar circumstances or parallel circumstances before. I

would very much like to see that recognised as a reflection of the responsibility that is carried by ministers."

Neither the previous Conservative administration nor the present Government has accepted any financial responsibility for victims of new-variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, which most scientists accept is BSE in humans beings, probably caused by eating infected beef. Some 30 people have died from the new strain of CJD since 1995.

Mrs Currie, a junior minister from 1986 to 1988 who was forced to resign over the salmonella-in-eggs furore, absolved herself and the Depart-

ment of Health from any direct responsibility for what went wrong in the handling of BSE, laying the blame at the door of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, which she described in earlier evidence as "crass and incompetent".

She contrasted MAFF's efforts to tackle the BSE crisis with what she claimed was the highly successful approach of the Department of Health in dealing with Aids in the 1980s. The Health Department had made it a top priority to develop a diagnostic test for the early detection of Aids, she said. It was a "disgrace" that there was still no comparable test for

detecting cattle incubating BSE. "If you are going to make progress, you need to be able to test whether the disease is present, and preferably before it has killed its host," she said.

"In my view, if MAFF had said in 1986-87 'let's get research done to create a test', it would have been available a short time later and it would have been possible to identify sick animals and have taken action very much more quickly."

Mrs Currie was asked what she thought of the assurances by agriculture ministers in 1990, after she had left the Government, that British beef was safe to eat. She said: "I had

a lot of sympathy for ministers trying to cope with a background of a dearth of information. They were required to say something."

But she added: "I think Sir Donald Acheson (former chief medical officer) was right to say that they could have been more cautious." Her approach would have been to tell the public every scrap of information, adding: "If I had then been asked 'do you still eat beef?' I would have said yes. I am not sure I would have fed hamburger to one of my children, but there you go."

In May 1990 John Gummer, then Agriculture Minister, had his daughter to eat a beefburger in public. Mr Gummer is among more than 20 former Tory ministers due to appear.



Currie yesterday: contrasted BSE with Aids action

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A 13-point guide to your quality of life

Nick Nuttall and Alexandra Frean report on a plan for better growth

THE Government's latest salvo of statistics gives a more rounded picture of modern Britain than bare economic indicators. John Prescott said yesterday.

The Deputy Prime Minister said that the "quality of life barometer" was designed to reflect people's concerns about health, housing, jobs and the environment. The statistics would allow people, business and policymakers to see at a glance how their own actions might create wealth without destroying the environment.

"We are aiming for cleaner growth. It is a matter of gain, not pain; generating jobs and prosperity in a way which uses energy more wisely, creates less waste and pollution and is fairer to all in society," he said.

The quality of life barometer will comprise 13 key indicators from birdlife and greenhouse gas emission to employment levels and life expectancy. They are outlined in a consultation document, *Sustainability Counts*, published by the Department of Environment yesterday. The 13 indicators in the barometer are:

□ Populations of wild birds: farmland and woodland birds have generally been in decline since the mid 1970s. Populations of some farmland birds such as the skylark and corn bunting, and of woodland birds such as the song thrush and willow tit, have fallen by more than half.

□ Emissions of greenhouse gases: UK emissions of the "basket" of greenhouse gases fell by 5 per cent between 1990 and 1996. Emissions of carbon dioxide (the main contributor) fell by 8 per cent between 1990 and 1997. It is now universally recognised that greenhouse gases are one of the greatest environmental threats because they are causing global temperatures to rise.

□ Days of air pollution: in urban areas the average number of days when air pollution was recorded as moderate or worse fell from 62 days in 1993 to 40 days in 1997. In rural areas the average number of days per site rose in the late 1980s but has since remained at about 40 to 50 days a year.

□ Road traffic: motor vehicle traffic in 1997 was more than eight times that in 1950 and car traffic in particular was

more than 14 times higher. □ Rivers of good or fair quality: nearly 95 per cent of the river network in the UK is assessed as being of good or fair quality, which means it is generally capable of supporting fish and can be used readily as a source for drinking water supplies, following treatment.

□ Average life expectancy: this is increasing and is now about 74 years for men and 79 years for women. However, the number of years people can expect to live in good health is some years fewer, and men in manual occupations generally have five years lower life expectancy than those in professional jobs.

□ Educational qualifications at age 19: in 1996, 72 per cent of 19-year-olds had achieved qualifications NVQ level two or equivalent (five GCSEs at grades C or above).

□ New homes built on previously developed land: in England about 55 per cent of new homes (including conversions) are now built on previously developed land. The Government has set a target of 60 per cent to be achieved by 2008.

□ Waste and waste disposal: about 145 million tonnes of waste are produced each year in the UK by households, commerce and industry, including construction and demolition. More than 60 per cent of this — around 90 million tonnes — is disposed of in landfill sites.

□ Homes judged unfit to live in: the proportion of these decreased from 8.8 per cent in 1986 (in England) to 7.2 per cent (about 1.5 million) in 1996. □ Economic growth: total output of the economy (GDP) since 1970, the output of the economy has grown by 80 per cent in real terms, around 2.3 per cent per year on average.

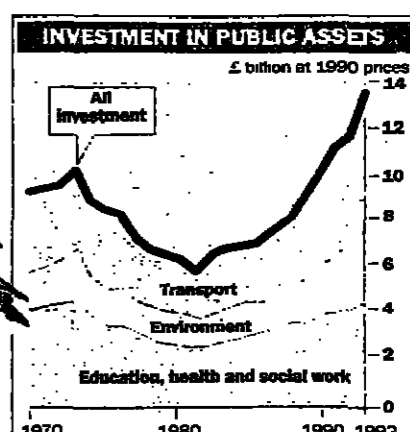
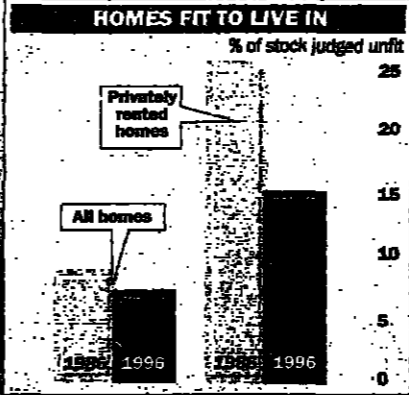
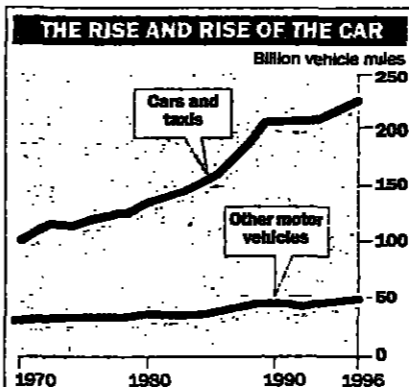
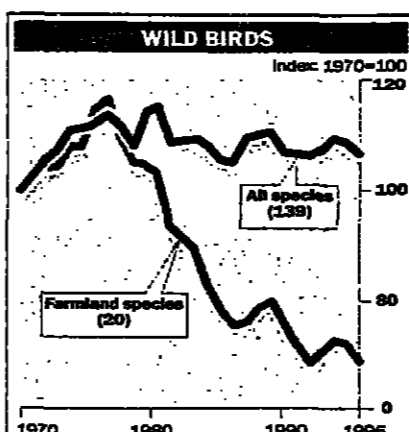
□ Social investment: spending on public assets (railways, buses, roads, hospitals, schools, water and sewerage) accounts for 10 per cent of capital spending and 2 per cent of GDP. It steadily increased in real terms in the 1980s.

□ Employment: the percentage of the working age population who are in work increased to a peak of 75 per cent in 1990, falling to 70 per cent in the early '90s during the recession. Since 1994 the proportion has increased slowly to 73 per cent in 1998.

A SYMBOL OF DECLINE

In drafting the new, sustainable development indicators, 20 common farmland and 41 woodland birds have been chosen to map the ups and downs of animals and plants (writes Nick Nuttall). For example, the skylark, a farmland bird, has slumped in numbers by 60 per cent, or three million breeding birds, in the past quarter century. The biggest decline has been in the arable farming areas of the south east. Its last strongholds are in a band up the east coast through Yorkshire and Northumberland into Scotland, according to John Marchant of the British Trust for Ornithology. The damage is caused mainly by intensive agriculture which robs the birds of the seeds and other foods it needs to thrive.

READING THE SKYLARK INDEX



WHERE TO LIVE:

THE BEST AND THE WORST

GDP	
Inner London (West) 418%	E Lothian and Midlothian 56%
Unemployment	
Surrey 3.1%	Liverpool 18.3%
Life expectancy (men)	
Cambridge 76.6	Manchester 69.9
Education	
Isles of Scilly 61.1%	Kingston-upon-Hull 21.4%
Air pollution (rural)	
N Yorks (=best) 17%	E Sussex 32%
Traffic congestion (2 or more cars)	
North East 17%	South East 32%
Water	
Among best: Wharfe, Tyne, Tees	Among worst: Irwell, Ait
Wildlife (skylarks)	
East Coast 61.1%	South East
Land use	
London 87%	South West 37%
Waste (Recycling)	
Castle Morpeth 31.9%	City of London 0.4%

THE GOOD: NORTH YORKS, NORTH EAST

GDP: 126% national average (York)
Unemployment: 3.5% (N Yorks, 3rd)
Life expectancy (men): 74
Education (5Cs at GCSE): 54.0 (5th)
Air pollution: Low smog
Traffic congestion (2 or more cars): 17%
Water: Wharfe, Tyne, Tees among best rivers
Wildlife: Healthy skylark population
Land use: 47% new homes on derelict land
Waste (recycling): 31.9% (Castle Morpeth)



THE BAD: KNOWSLEY

GDP: 71% (E Merseyside)
Unemployment: 17.7% (2nd worst)
Life expectancy: 72.4 (65th/105)
Education: 23.4 (2nd worst)
Air pollution: High exhaust levels
Traffic congestion (2 or more cars): 24%
Water: Ait among worst quality rivers
Wildlife: Few skylarks
Land use: 65%
Waste (recycling): 1.3%

Film-makers hope football satire will score US detains aid volunteers

By DOMINIC KENNEDY

A FILM satirising England's soccer team, managers and the Football Association is to be made with £2 million of National Lottery money.

Behind it are Duncan Kenworthy, who produced *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, and Andrew Macdonald, the producer of *Trainspotting*. DNA Films — Mr Kenworthy and Mr Macdonald's partnership — has been given

£29 million from the lottery to create a mini-studio to revive British cinema, and make 16 films over five years.

They are going for projects with big box-office potential. Steve Coogan (BBC2's *Alan Partridge*) will play the title role in *The Probation Officer*; and Amy Jenkins, creator of *This Life*, has written a teenage romance.

The midfielder and coach-turned-actor Vinnie Jones, who this year made his acclaimed screen debut in *Lock*,

Stock and Two Smoking Barrels, has been chosen to star in *Mike Bassett: England Manager*. The makers want the Manchester United legend Eric Cantona, the Wimbledon and Jamaica midfielder Robbie Earl, and the television presenter Jim Rosenthal and John McCrick to join in the fun.

Mike Bassett: England Manager, set during some future World Cup, has been scripted by Rob Sprackling and John Smith. The characters include

"Roza", who, according to Mr Sprackling, is "a Geordie who is completely ridiculous". The captain, "Tony Harper", is "like Tony Adams, Stuart Pearce, Terry Butcher. He will get his head cut and keep going. He keeps missing penalties at crucial moments but otherwise will never let you down." Mr Sprackling said the FA deserved criticism; some saw them as "a load of stuffed shirts running a game that is nothing to do with them".

By ADRIAN LEE

BRITISH aid volunteers were threatened with imprisonment by United States immigration officials as they flew home from Honduras after helping victims of Hurricane Mitch. They were held for six hours and fined a total of £1,200.

Yesterday, as they flew into Heathrow, the nine men and a

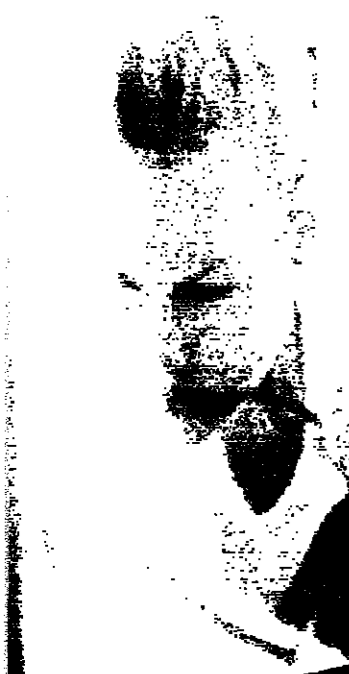
woman complained of aggressive treatment. The volunteers had worked for two weeks in appalling conditions in Honduras, where up to 7,000 people died. Their duties involved recovering bodies.

The group, members of the charity Rapid UK, based at Okehampton, Devon, obtained a lift home on a cargo plane owned by an Anglo-Rus-

sian company. During a stop at the McConnell military airbase at Wichita, Kansas, an immigration officer said their paperwork was not in order.

Last night the US Immigration Service said that the party did not have a visa waiver form that is available free to Britons. There were no plans to refund the fine. "It was their mistake," a spokesman said.

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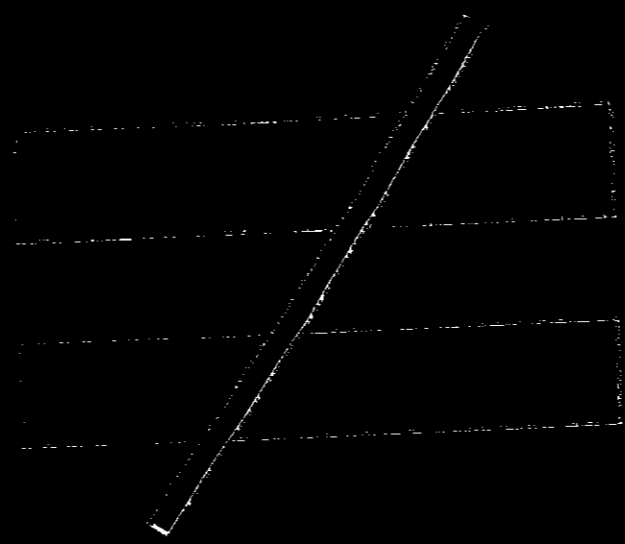
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Former inmate wins challenge over condom ban

A FORMER prisoner won the right yesterday to bring a test case challenging the Prison Service's refusal to allow condoms to be freely available in jails.

Glen Fielding, who was freed from prison earlier this year, claims that he and other inmates were at risk of infection with HIV because of the ban on condoms on demand.

Lord Bingham of Cornhill, the Lord Chief Justice, said that the case should be heard as quickly as possible. He and two other appeal court judges overturned a High Court ruling that Mr Fielding, who is homosex-

Judges allow test case over 'an irrational and perverse' policy, reports Richard Ford

ual, did not have an "arguable case". Leon Daniel, counsel for Mr Fielding, from London, said that the case raised an issue of public importance, because prisoners who might be unaware they had picked up HIV might infect others on their release.

He said that Mr Fielding complained that he and other prison inmates in England and Wales were at risk from Aids because of an "irrational and perverse" Home Office policy of issuing condoms only to in-

mates already infected or believed by doctors to be at risk of infection.

Lord Bingham, sitting with Lord Justice Peter Gibson and Lord Justice Waller, said that the case raised issues of importance that should receive a full hearing. The Lord Chief Justice said it was known that male prisoners had sexual relations with each other even though the policy of the Home Office in no way encouraged the practice. The Home Secretary had acknowledged a duty of care

to the prison population and allowed prison medical officers to prescribe condoms where there was a risk of infection.

Lord Bingham added that it was now argued that it was irrational that medical officers should not be free to prescribe condoms to "serving prisoners who admit having sexual relationships with other inmates".

Lawyers for Mr Fielding said that condoms should be available even where there was no diagnosis of infec-

tion or risk, since prisoners might not know they were infected. The current policy was also condemned as irrational because prisoners were banned from receiving condom supplies from private sources for their own use. Lord Bingham said: "It is clear there are matters which merit consideration and we grant leave for judicial review."

Before he was released in April after serving four and a half years for robbery with assault, Mr Fielding

had been transferred to the privately run Blakenhurst jail near Redditch, Worcestershire, and supplied with condoms. His request had previously been refused at Leicester prison and Little Hey jail near Huntingdon.

Elkan Abrahamson, Mr Fielding's solicitor, said that he hoped the Prison Service would review the policy. "They accept that homosexual sex can take place lawfully in prison and accept they have a duty to protect prisoners from infections. But they do not want to be seen encouraging such sex; as a result they are taking an illogical position."

Wolves reject a cub as manager

By Helen Johnstone

EDWARD HAYCOCK'S application for the job of manager of Wolverhampton Wanderers featured an impressive list of victories — including taking the League Cup and the European Cup in a year.

But a letter from John Richard, the Wolves' chairman, telling him "thanks, but no thanks", ended his dreams with a ruling that, at seven years old, he did not have enough experience. His application was, unfortunately, further hampered by the fact that his success relates to a computer game.

Edward, from Romsey, Hampshire, has played Ultimate Soccer Manager for two hours a day since his father, David, bought it a year ago. The Wolves supporter got the idea of applying for the job when Mark McGhee left the First Division club last month after a string of poor results.

He told the club about his experience at managing and picking teams, as well as buying and selling players. He said: "The most successful I have been was with Real Madrid once. I have coached lots of other teams and have done quite well. Dad could do all the books and Mum could wash the kit while I pick the team."

Wolves said: "Edward's letter raised a few smiles around the office and we would like to thank him for his interest."



Edward Haycock: computer success

Prisoners used paper planes to smuggle drugs

Chief Inspector expresses his concern after ruse is discovered during inspection, reports Richard Ford

PRISONERS throw paper darts over the perimeter wall of a jail to obtain drugs and other contraband, according to an inspection report published today.

Inmates in two wings close to the wall at Stafford jail attach lines to the end of the darts and then haul the contraband back into the prison grounds. Sir David Ramsbotham, the Chief Inspector of Prisons, discovered the smuggling during an inspection at the jail and says that he is concerned that two wings are extremely close to the perimeter wall and that drugs were available throughout the jail. "We saw numerous strips of paper which had been used as darts to throw lines over the wall to obtain drugs and other contraband," his report says.

The chief inspector says that grilles had been fitted to some cell windows in an attempt to prevent inmates throwing darts over the wall. But the grilles fitted to the windows had easily been broken by prisoners who wanted access to the wall.

His report calls for further action at the jail to prevent inmates in F wing from getting articles passed over the perimeter wall. Sir David said that

the governor had told him that drugs were a problem in the jail and that inmates held on F wing were happy to stay there because of the availability of illegal substances.

Sir David's report is also highly critical of the overcrowding and the under-resourcing at the jail, which held 615 prisoners compared with a certified normal accommodation of 568 inmates. He said that budget reductions had resulted in a cut of 29 per cent in the provision of education since April and that more cash was vitally needed for full employment to be achieved.

The chief inspector said that



Ramsbotham: concern over cuts in education

different financial resources were allocated to different prisons containing the same kind of inmates. "This means that there are some category C prisons in which a prisoner can expect better treatment, and more opportunities of work and education, than are available in Stafford, which must be wrong."

"Treatment and conditions should not be a lottery, depending on the part of the country in which a prisoner is held," he says.

Richard Tilt, Director-General of the Prison Service, admitted that the report was critical but said that there had been improvements at Stafford. He said he was satisfied that the problem of drugs getting into the prison over the wall had been dealt with.

The Prison Service has put rolls of razor wire on top of the perimeter wall to stop inmates throwing paper darts over it and has installed closed-circuit television cameras to improve monitoring of the walls.

Mr Tilt added that Stafford had bid for more resources from the extra £250 million made available by the Government to provide for constructive regimes in jails over the next three years.



Shane Fitzgerald erects a Gaelic "for sale" sign at Ballynahown, Galway, after boards using English were defaced

Signs of strife over Irish tongue

By Audrey Magee, Ireland Correspondent

IRISH language campaigners in the west of Ireland are forcing many estate agents to turn "For sale" signs into Gaelic, to the bewilderment of English-speaking prospective buyers. The campaigners go round Galway at night with pots of paint, repeatedly blacking out for-sale signs written in English until the agents change them for signs in Irish.

Shane Fitzgerald, an estate agent in Galway city, switched to Irish after three signs costing £200 each were spoilt. He now puts up signs in the Gaeltacht, or Irish-speaking areas, along the Galway coast that proclaim *Le diol* (For sale) and

issues property details in Gaelic. "These people have a certain amount of right on their side because I am using English in an Irish-speaking area," he said. But Brian Forde, an estate agent in Barna, refuses to yield to protesters who have spoilt 25 of his signs since August. He said: "I like the Irish language. I love it, but I am not going to be bullied into using it by a tiny minority in the community. In the past they blacked out English road signs, leaving tourists wandering around the place like headless chickens. I am not giving in to them."

Mr Forde cleans his English signs and puts them back up. One of his clients takes in his "For sale" sign every night and re-erects it each morning. Only about

4 per cent of people in the Irish Republic speak Irish fluently but there is a resurgence of interest in the language, with classes across the country booked up. Businesses are being asked to erect bilingual signs and to use Irish to greet visitors to the country.

The use of English remains crucial, particularly to estate agents in the west, who sell a lot of property to people from England, Germany, The Netherlands and the United States.

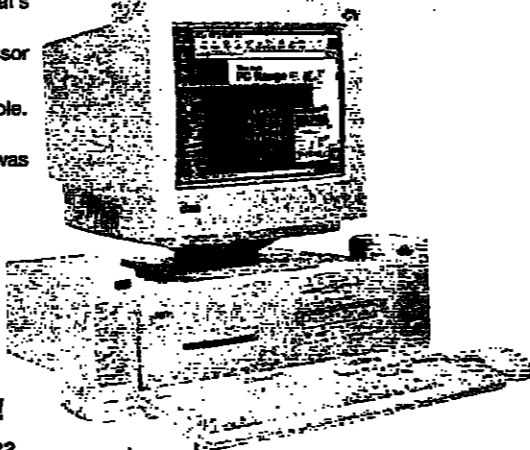
But Peadar Mac Fhianncha, a spokesman for Conrad na Gaeilge, a government-funded Irish language group, said: "When it comes to property, people can read Irish in the same way people can read French, if they want to."



Peadar Mac Fhianncha: spokesman for Conrad na Gaeilge

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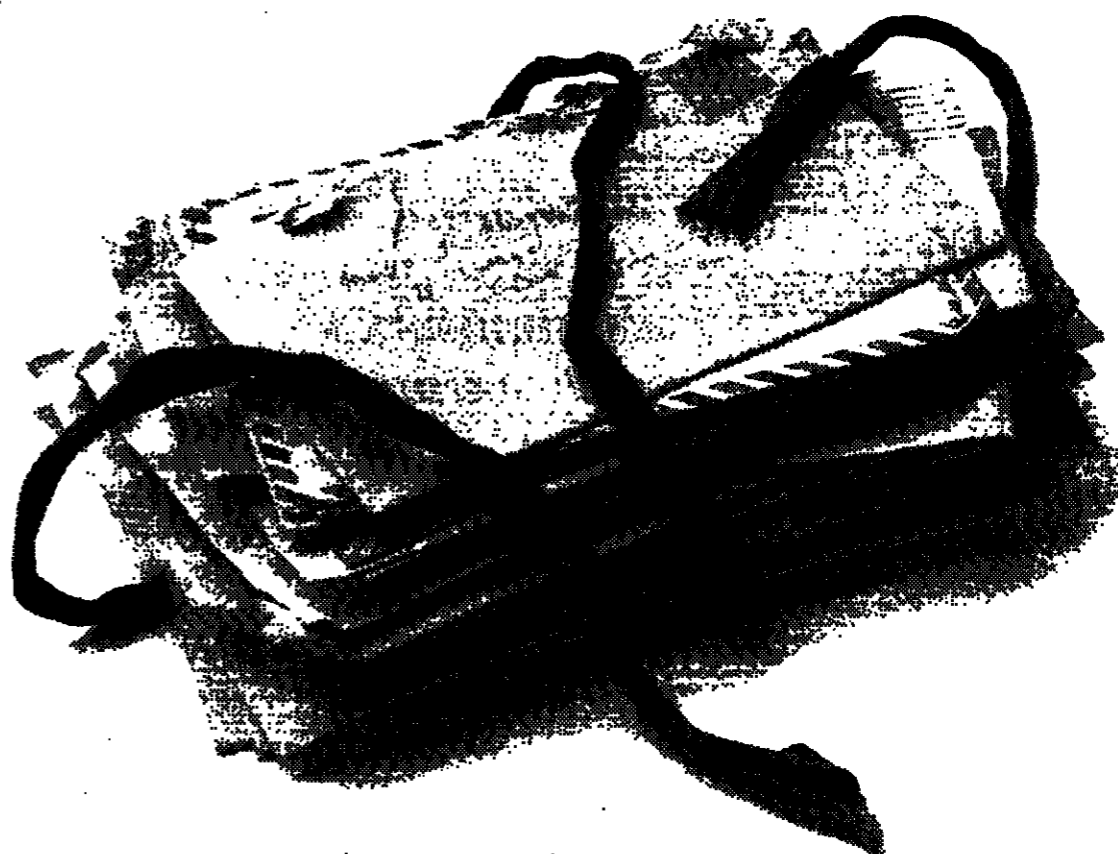


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Chance meeting at bus stop saves boy's life

By SIMON DE BRUKELLES

A 21-MONTH-OLD boy dying from meningitis owes his life to a chance encounter at a bus stop.

Ashle Sharp's mother, Alex, was carrying the youngster, unaware that he was seriously ill. But Marie Lord, a fellow passenger who was also waiting to catch a bus at Dartington in Devon at the weekend, recognised the symptoms of meningitis.



Able woman at bus stop saw signs of meningitis

She immediately ran to a phone box and dialled 999. Within minutes the child was fighting for his life in an ambulance heading for Torbay Hospital. Another few minutes and medical staff say he would almost certainly have died.

Able was transferred to the Bristol Children's Hospital, where yesterday his condition had improved from critical to stable.

The two women had never met before their encounter at the bus stop. Mrs Lord, 38, who has three children of her own, said: "I was waiting for the bus to go into town when a woman came over with a baby slumped over her shoulder."

"I'll talk to anybody. You do when you're bored at a bus stop, so I asked if the toddler was tired. She said no, she

thought he had flu. I had a look at him and his lips and face were a deathly blue and grey. Also he was very floppy. "I asked her whether he had a rash and she said she thought not. I pulled up Able's T-shirt and there was one on his stomach."

"I just froze. It was then that I knew it was meningitis. In the ten minutes he was there, the boy had gone from barely opening his eyes to almost unconscious. There was no way she had time to wait for the bus and go to the doctors."

Mrs Lord rushed to the phone box, where a man she knew was making a call. She said: "I yanked him out of the box and phoned for an ambulance." Speaking from Able's

bedside, Miss Sharp, 33, said: "I am so grateful to her. She saved my son's life. Every doctor here said it was a miracle we caught him in time and that is all down to Mrs Lord."

"I'd never met her before. When she pulled up his T-shirt and saw the black spots, she said she thought it was meningitis. She dropped her bags and ran to the phone. I thought she was being a bit dramatic. I could have just ignored her..."

"On the way to the hospital Able's decline was horrifyingly rapid. He had to be oxygenated — it was like he was dying in front of me. If it had been literally a couple of minutes later, he might not have survived."

Asked how she had been so sure of her amateur diagnosis, Mrs Lord said: "The publicity about meningitis in the media had just stuck in my mind. I'm sure anyone else would have done the same thing. It's every parent's worst nightmare."

A Devon ambulance spokesman said last night: "The ambulance and paramedics concerned would like to pay tribute to Mrs Lord, whose quick-thinking undoubtedly saved the boy's life. We would encourage anyone in an emergency to dial 999."



Step back in time: "Visitors to Pompeii walk over floors so there is no reason why they should not in Dorchester"

Stepping softly into Roman past

By SIMON DE BRUKELLES

VISITORS will be able to start the new millennium by stepping back almost 2,000 years on to intricate mosaic floors discovered in Britain's most complete Roman town house.

The red and white geometric patterns in ceramic and limestone are being excavated at the 14-room ruin at Dorchester, Dorset. But instead of being kept off the ancient floors, visitors will be encouraged to walk, carefully, across them.

The Colliton Park site should be open to the public by the start of 2000. Lawrence Keen, Dorset county archaeologist, said: "Visitors to Pompeii walk over the original floors so there is no reason why they should not do the same thing in Dorchester."

"We were considering a series of flying walkways above the mosaics but having seen them at other sites in Italy we decided they would ruin the look of the floors and diminish



The complete floorplan of the Roman house is visible

the visitors' experience of them. We have decided instead to let people walk over the mosaics, which gives a wonderful feeling of being in touch with the past. We will closely monitor the wear and tear on the flooring and it may be that we have to step in at some stage in the future to protect it but we hope not."

The location of the house had been known for more

than 60 years but this is the first proper excavation. Mr Keen said: "It is the only complete floor plan of a Roman house in Britain. There are quite a few country villas but all the town houses have been built over. The site was investigated but at the outbreak of war it was covered and has been left like that ever since."

This year's excavation was made possible by a £300,000

grant from the county council. Mr Keen added: "We are delighted with what we have found. The mosaics are in fantastic condition considering they have been under earth for so long. There is significant damage from ants and tree roots in some rooms but in one room, which we think must have been a bedroom, the mosaic is still complete."

Dorchester was founded as Durnovicia between AD70 and AD80 by Roman invaders. By AD130 the town was surrounded by defensive ramparts and in its northwest corner was the large private house, surrounded by light industrial units, mainly engaged in metal work. The house was largely abandoned by 400.

It is now protected by a new glass and stone structure built on top of the original knapped-flint foundation walls. The county has asked applied for a lottery grant to assist with funding for the project, which includes an education centre.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Abduction case man remanded

A man appeared in court yesterday charged with kidnapping Charles Seiga, 58, a businessman who was allegedly tortured during a 30-hour abduction. Brian Airey, 28, from Wavertree, Liverpool, was also charged with causing grievous bodily harm and two firearms offences. He was remanded in custody until December 1 by Liverpool magistrates.

Baxter recovers

The former Scotland footballer Jim Baxter is recovering in Glasgow's Victoria Hospital after a heart scare. It was confirmed. Baxter, who has had two liver transplants, was said to be in a stable condition in the coronary care unit.

Soldier's victory

The Ministry of Defence has agreed in the High Court to pay former Rifleman Sean Hogg, 27, from Plaistow, East London, £350,000 for injuries to his knee caused when a helicopter crashed in Ulster while trying to avoid a bird flock.

Case of robbery

An armed robbery trial at Minshull Street Crown Court, Manchester, was adjourned for 24 hours after a thief stole a case containing the papers and court costume of Mohair wig and black gown of Peter Warne, a defence counsel.

Prince's post

The Prince of Wales has become patron of Britain's biggest breast cancer research group, Breakthrough. Delyth Morgan, its head, said: "The most important thing is that it shows that breast cancer is not just a female issue."

Badger watch

Police in rural areas around Cardiff are spraying badgers and their setts with an anti-crimine theft to foil baiters. The spray, designed to protect property, rubs off easily on to baiters, their spades and dogs.

Yours sincerely... Liszt

By DALYA ALBERGE, ARTS CORRESPONDENT

PREVIOUSLY unpublished letters by Elgar and Liszt and photographs of Paganini and Tchaikovsky on which the composers had scribbled signatures and snippets of their music are included in an archive donated to the Royal Academy of Music.

The collection, valued at more than £2 million, has been given by a former stu-

dent, Norman McCann, who is suffering from cancer. He became an artists' agent with a reputation for recognising talent, bringing stars such as the tenor Placido Domingo to Britain for the first time.

The archive includes letters and manuscripts from leading composers and conductors, rare song collections and silk programmes dating back to

the 1820s for first performances of many operas in Europe and America. It will form a centrepiece of a museum to be established next to the academy in Marylebone, London.

The signed photographs — probably the largest such collection — feature musical quotations from known works and a few snippets not yet identified.


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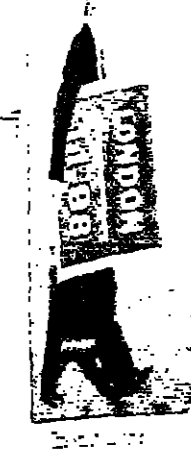


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NEWS IN BRIEF

Abduction case man remanded

A man appeared in court yesterday charged with kidnaping a woman who was allegedly abducted during a 30-hour abductee. Liverpool man was charged with causing grievous bodily harm and indecent offences. He was remanded in custody until October 1 by Liverpool magistrates.

Baxter recovers

Former Scotland footballer Baxter is recovering in hospital from a serious injury sustained in a football match. He was taken to hospital after being struck in the head by a stray ball during a game in the Scottish League.

Soldier's victory

A British soldier has won a court case against a local council. The council had refused to allow the soldier to use his private land for a memorial to his fallen comrades.

Case of robbery

A man has been charged with robbing a woman in a public house. The woman was taken to hospital with injuries after the man forced her to hand over her money.

Prince's post

The Prince of Wales has written a letter to the people of London. He expressed his sympathy for the city and its people during the Millennium celebrations.

Water walk

A group of people have walked across a body of water. The walk was part of a charity event to raise money for a local hospital.

We are not enthused by millennium party plans

Mark Henderson on a new £500,000 roadshow to fight apathy in the UK

ALMOST half the population thinks that Britain's £2 billion investment to celebrate the millennium will not affect them at all, a new poll for the Millennium Commission has found.

Only 3 per cent of Britons polled by MORI last month said that they thought the celebrations would mean "a great deal" or "a fair amount" to them personally. Eleven per cent said they would benefit "a little" and fewer than one in 20 thought that the celebrations would be of much benefit to them personally.

The figures will add to the concerns about the low profile of projects outside London, which led the commission yesterday to launch the Millennium Voyager, a £500,000 roadshow that will tour 23 towns and cities promoting local plans for 2000.

Commission officials are worried that the mass of publicity about the Millennium

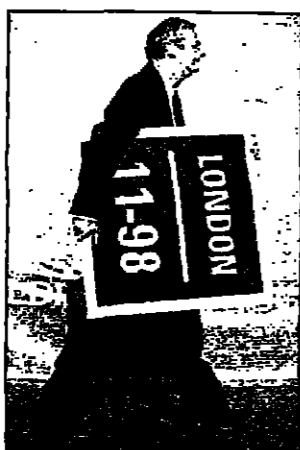
Dome—much of it negative—is stealing the limelight from the plethora of other buildings and investment schemes across the United Kingdom. Expensive regional capital projects such as the Earth Centre in Doncaster, which has been given a £50 million grant, and the Eden Project in Cornwall, a £37.15 million investment, have largely been overlooked as the media and the public focus on Greenwich.

A scale model of the Dome on display in the Millennium Voyager was covered up at yesterday's launch of the roadshow. Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, said that the Dome was "interesting and important" but that other celebrations across Britain were just as significant.

"It is vital to get the message across that the Millennium is for the whole country. It is not just about London or the Dome at Greenwich, important though that will be," he said.

Mike O'Connor, the director of the Millennium Commission, said that the poll's findings were disappointing but would soon be reversed.

"For most people, the benefits of the Millennium Commission's spending are some way off, so it is not surprising that few think there will be something in it for them," he said. "Only 23 of the 188 projects we have funded have opened and we have yet to get the message over that 3,000 sites all over Britain will gain from the celebrations. It will be a revelation to people when it is all finished."



Chris Smith at the roadshow yesterday



Martyn Farr, of the South Wales Caving Club, examines part of the Dan yr Ogof caves before drilling to discover the missing part of the system

Cave men find underground labyrinth

By SIMON DE BRUXELLES

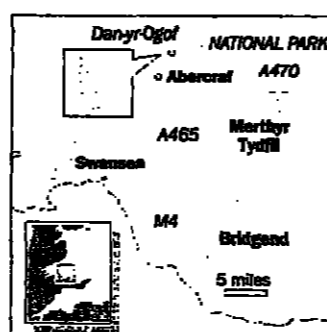
GEOLOGISTS and mining engineers believe they have found an unexplored cave system up to ten miles long in the limestone hills of South Wales.

Cavers have spent years searching for the caverns in the Brecon Beacons National Park. Ten miles of caves, some of which are open to the public, had already been explored but dye put into underground streams indicated that at least the same distance again remained undiscovered.

After years of fruitless searching for an entrance, two mining engineers from the nearby Tower Colliery were called in and made the breakthrough at the weekend.

The engineers, guided by advice from Keith Ball, a geologist, bored three inch-and-a-half holes in the roof of the Dan yr Ogof showcaves at Abercraf, near Swansea. Each time their diamond-tipped drill found new caverns, one at least 10ft high, which are believed to be connected.

The caverns, formed by water percolating through the soluble



limestone since the rock was formed 315 million years ago, are likely to be filled with spectacular stalagmites, stalagmites and other rock formations.

Experts are also hoping they may contain archaeological remains, including evidence of the prehistoric residents known to have occupied other caves in the area up to 3,000 years ago. One of the new caves was just feet from Dan yr Ogof's Bone Cave, from where the remains of 42 Bronze Age people were excavated in 1912.

Ashford Price, the cave complex's manager, said: "People lived

in the Bone Cave right up to Roman times. It was probably a place of refuge during periods of danger, such as when chieftains were feuding. As one of the new caves was separated from the Bone Cavern by just a few feet it is possible there will be human remains in there as well.

"Finding a previously unrecorded system like this is an event which maybe happens once every 30 years. We knew there were miles and miles of tunnels down there but finding the 'trap door' has proved impossible.

"We are very grateful to the miners who have shown us a possible way in. Now we want to see what we have found while causing as little damage as possible."

The explorers are now looking for a fibre-optic camera that can be threaded through the borehole to determine the best place to cut a new tunnel through to the largest of the three new caves. Once a conservation expert has given the all-clear, members of the South Wales Caving Club will cut through the rock and begin exploring the new system.



Mr Farr and Clive Jones prepare to drill

Guerrilla matrons go to war on pylon project

By PAUL WILKINSON

THE ladies of the Women's Institute will become eco-warriors to thwart construction of an electricity pylon line which they believe will ruin their countryside. The matrons of Middle England will stop short of tunnelling beneath the 229 pylons going up next year across 50 miles of North Yorkshire but they do plan to be as awkward as possible.

Women's Institutes across the county have backed the long-running campaign against the National Grid's £500 million plan to erect the power line through the picturesque Vale of York. The string of transmission towers, some of them 180ft tall, will link a new gas-fired power station on Teesside with the power grid at Shipton, near York.

The company has continued with the project in the face of two lengthy public inquiries and sustained hostility from the county council, the Council for the Protection of Rural England, and William Hague, the MP for the North Yorkshire seat of Richmond.

The project was approved by Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, despite an undertaking by Labour in opposition to reject it.

Protestors have warned contractors that publicans and shopkeepers will not serve them, private farm tracks will be off-limits to their vehicles and local people will shun them. They are also considering digging wildlife ponds on all 229 sites to claim protection under environmental legislation. The county's WI members have also threatened to block construction traffic as it tries to negotiate rural lanes.

Janet Wright, chairwoman of the Women's Institute branch at Sowerby, near Thirsk, said: "We would go as far as possible but we would not break the law, although there may be WI members who will do everything in their power to obstruct the pylons."

expect more

the new ford focus

Robinson broke law 12 times, Tories say

THE Tories yesterday submitted a thick dossier to the Department of Trade and Industry with further allegations of breaches in company law by Geoffrey Robinson, the Paymaster General.

David Heathcoat-Amory, Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury, published details of 12 alleged breaches of company law between 1988 and 1992 involving companies linked to Mr Robinson.

It includes a claim that Hollis Industries, of which Mr Robinson was a director, had filed "false" accounts. It alleges that Hollis failed to inform the registrar of companies that he had resigned from his post as director more than six years after the event, in breach of company law.

A summary of the allegations published by the Tories accuses Mr Robinson of appearing to have a "wilful disregard for the laws laid down by Parliament to govern business in this country." It says that even if only some of the allegations are found to be accurate, then Mr Robinson should be disqualified as a director.

Dossier alleging breaches of company rules is sent to Trade Department, writes Jill Sherman

"Some of these allegations set out below relate to criminal offences. Some of the crimes set out below may be punished, if proven, by imprisonment," it says.

The dossier alleges that on June 24, 1991 Hollis Industries' accounts for 30 June 1991 were qualified by the accountants Coopers and Lybrand, as the auditors of the company, on the grounds that proper accounting records had not been maintained.

At the time Mr Robinson was chairman and a director. "It is a criminal offence which may be punished by imprisonment to be a director of a company which does not keep adequate accounting records," the dossier says.

On three separate occasions, Hollis and Sarcad International, of which Mr Robinson was allegedly a director,

failed to file public accounts on time, the dossier claims.

The DTI said it could neither confirm nor deny whether it was investigating Mr Robinson. The Treasury also declined to comment, saying it was a matter for the DTI.

A friend of Mr Robinson last night dismissed the latest allegations as a "silly stunt" by the Tories.

Mr Robinson was forced to make a personal apology to the Commons last week after the Standards and Privileges Committee found he had failed to declare various directorships in the Register of Members' Interests.

The apology came after an embarrassing string of allegations over the minister's business affairs, the most serious of which have been dismissed by the committee.

On Sunday William Hague

called for Mr Robinson's resignation pending a DTI investigation, claiming it would be impossible for one minister to investigate another.

Yesterday Mr Heathcoat-Amory wrote to Peter Mandelson enclosing the dossier and referring to an earlier allegation which he had passed on to the Trade Secretary. He asked Mr Mandelson to report on progress but suggested that the inquiry be handled independently.

"In view of the fact that this will involve one minister investigating criminal law matters involving another minister I suggest that the investigation is not handled by your department, but is instead referred to an independent prosecution service."

The Prime Minister has so far resisted calls to sack Mr Robinson although several ministers think he is becoming a liability to the Government.

Gordon Brown, one of Mr Robinson's closest allies, insisted that the Paymaster General kept his job in the last reshuffle but many expect him to be moved out in the next.



Out of the shadows: Rhodri Morgan launching his campaign to become First Secretary of the Welsh assembly

Morgan campaigns against sleaze

RHODRI MORGAN promised a sleaze-free Welsh assembly when he launched his campaign yesterday to become Wales's first "prime minister" (Valerie Elliott writes). The Labour MP made clear that an assembly under his leadership

would be for the people and not the Welsh Establishment. He said: "May 7, 1999 is the day on which Wales stops being administered as a government department and starts being run as a country. That must mean few, if any,

quangos; no vested interests and no narrow sectionalism."

Tyronne O'Sullivan, saviour of the Tower Colliery, will back his leadership bid. Mr O'Sullivan, chairman of the colliery workforce after buying the pit from British Coal,

said: "I believe Rhodri is now the natural leader of Wales. Wales is a radical country and we need radical politics."

Mr Morgan also promised to step down as an MP if he became First Secretary, putting pressure on Alun Michael, Tony Blair's preferred candidate, to reveal his plans. An electoral college will not meet until February to de-

cide the choice of leader. Privately Mr Michael's supporters acknowledge that Mr Morgan has a head start and is viewed "with affection" by the Welsh people. But they believe voters will recognise Mr Michael as the more credible candidate.

They dismissed a random telephone poll by the *South Wales Echo* which put support for Mr Morgan at 84 per cent and for Mr Michael at 16 per cent. "We suspect there was a lot of redialling and no checks," said one. Mr Michael's campaign will not start until he is selected as a Labour assembly candidate.

£1.5m spending cap sought for Holyrood poll

BY JILL SHERMAN, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Labour leadership is pressing opposition parties to agree to a voluntary spending cap of £1.5 million for the elections to the Scottish parliament and £800,000 for the Welsh assembly next year.

Although the Queen's Speech today will not include powers to implement the recent Neill report's recommendations on election funding, Labour is now trying to get agreement from the Liberal Democrats, the Tories and particularly the Scottish National Party on a ceiling in time for next year's elections.

Some trade unions are threatening to withhold funds for the Scottish and Welsh elections next May, because of signs that the Government may water down legislation on workers rights. Trade unions have given £185,000 — considerably less than party officials were expecting.

Union officials said last night that there was anger over reports that the Bill was being diluted. Unions had not pledged much cash and were unlikely to offer much support during campaigning.

Labour says it is confident

that it can secure £1.5 million with the help of the Scottish business community and that negotiations with unions are still continuing.

Alec Rowley, the party's Scottish General Secretary, says he has managed to secure agreement in principle from the Tories and the Liberal Democrats to a voluntary cap but the SNP has so far refused to accept his demands.

Lord Neill of Bladen, who suggested the £1.5 million figure, also called for a ban on foreign donations and for full disclosure of donations over £5,000. The SNP has been opposed to a cap in the past, although it changed its position last month.

Labour insisted, however, that the SNP was steadfastly opposed to disclosing donations over £5,000 and banning foreign donations. They argue that a substantial proportion of SNP donors are from the United States.

Yesterday the SNP claimed that it was prepared to sign up to all of Labour's demands. It said it had banned foreign donations and had published accounts in full.

Lib Dems propose own Queen's Speech

Matthew Taylor, the Lib Dems' environment spokesman, yesterday said that his party could not support Labour's drift towards "a new Conservatism", despite the policy of "constructive opposition" (Mark Ingfield writes). His attack came as the Lib Dems unveiled their alternative Queen's Speech. It calls for a European single currency Bill to deal with the euro; this would

help to reduce interest rates and provide "docking procedures" for early entry to the single currency, the party claims. "I do not want to see big issues kicked into the long grass," Paddy Ashdown said. The Liberal Democrats proposed five other legislative measures, including a Freedom of Information Act, a Pensions Reform Bill and a Food Standards Agency Bill.

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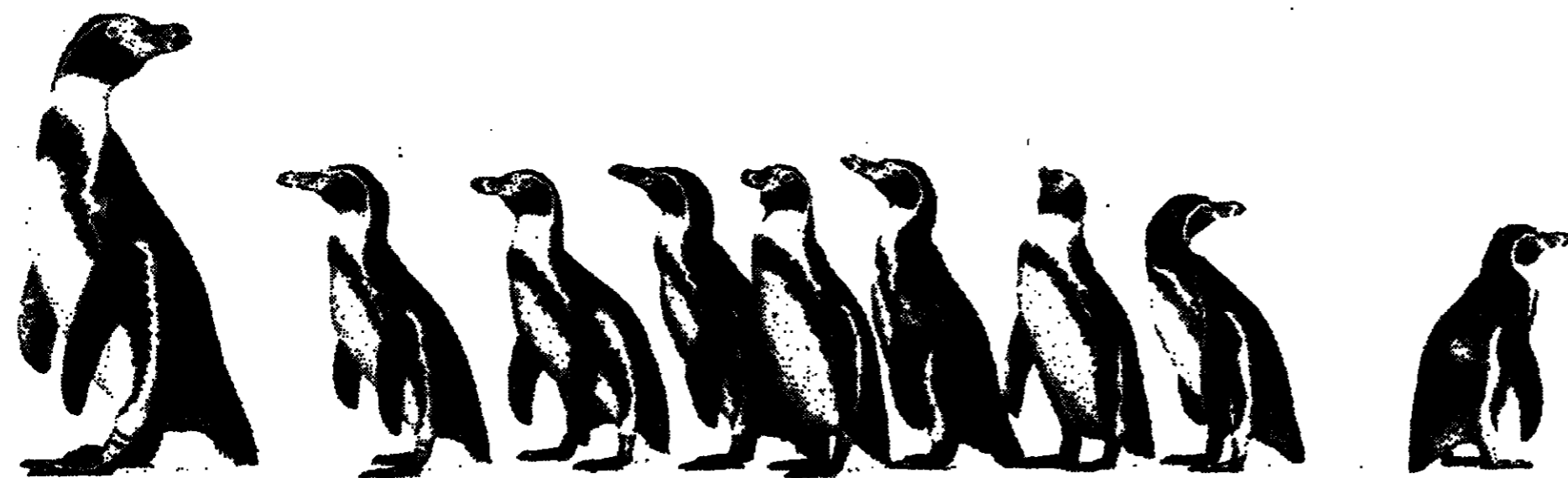
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Ailing Yeltsin holds hospital summit

Laid low by pneumonia, Russia's leader is an ever greater liability, writes Anna Blundy in Moscow

PRESIDENT Yeltsin was taken to hospital yesterday suffering from pneumonia, reigniting fears about Russia's political stability. In a brave attempt to prove that he is still in control, he held a 40-minute meeting with President Jiang Zemin of China from the somewhat unorthodox location of Moscow's Central Clinical Hospital.

Incapacitated by ill health since early last month, the once boisterous Mr Yeltsin, 67, has handed the day-to-day running of Russia over to Yevgeni Primakov, the Prime Minister, and has limited his own role to brief protocol meetings with visiting dignitaries.

Mr Yeltsin will spend up to ten days in the hospital, the Kremlin said. He was found to have a temperature of 38.9C (102F), but by yesterday afternoon this had been stabilised by antibiotics.

Statements to the effect that Mr Yeltsin is alive and well have been issued every time he has left the public eye since 1989. But on October 11, when Mr Yeltsin nearly fell over at a ceremony in Uzbekistan, it became clear that his condition was serious.

Professor Brian Pentecost, medical director of the British Heart Foundation, said: "A condition such as pneumonia would pose a serious risk to someone in their late sixties who has established coronary disease which may have resulted in heart failure and who has also undergone major

heart surgery to bypass blocked arteries." Mr Yeltsin underwent a quintuple heart bypass in November 1996.

Since the Uzbekistan fiasco, the President has cancelled visits to Malaysia, Austria and India and has failed to appear at a state banquet in honour of Keizo Obuchi, the Japanese Prime Minister. For some months now, Mr Yeltsin has arrived for work in the Kremlin only sporadically. For at least three years, his motorcade has been closely followed by an ambulance at all times.

At brief meetings with Ger-

hard Schröder, the German Chancellor, and Mr Obuchi, Mr Yeltsin looked sickly and distracted. His popularity rating in Russia has dropped to 1 per cent, even lower than that of Mikhail Gorbachev, the man whose very unpopularity gave Mr Yeltsin such credibility in the early 1990s, and his aides are barely able to let him appear in public for fear that he will expose the extent of his incapacity.

Mr Yeltsin's "sore throats", "colds" and respiratory problems do little to explain his forgetfulness, his agonising inco-

herence and slowness, and his evident difficulty standing unaided for more than a short time. His role in Russia's political life is now negligible and his administration has long been fending off demands for thorough medical reports, impeachment and resignation.

Aleksandr Shokhin, the Duma representative of the Our Home is Russia party, has called for joint presidential and parliamentary elections next September, although Mr Yeltsin's term does not expire until 2000.

The alacrity with which Mr Primakov, 69, is effectively performing vice-presidential functions has prompted demands for the reinstatement of the post. Natalya Savvyolova, a Kremlin spokeswoman, said yesterday that such a move would now be considered. "The need may arise at any moment for the Prime Minister to take presidential powers for a minimum of three months," she added.

In the event of Mr Yeltsin's death, resignation or impeachment, Mr Primakov would become President pending elections within three months. Although a reluctant Prime Minister, cajoled into power as a compromise choice during the political crisis in September, he is emerging as Mr Yeltsin's most likely successor. Segodnya newspaper reported last week that Mr Primakov was the Kremlin's choice for President in 2000.



President Jiang Zemin of China during his hospital meeting with President Yeltsin yesterday

Leading article, page 19



Anatoli Onoprienko behind the iron bars of the dock in a Ukrainian court in Zhytomir yesterday at the start of his trial for more than 50 murders

Ukraine 'serial killer' in the dock

FROM ROBIN LODGE IN MOSCOW

THE trial opened yesterday in the western Ukrainian city of Zhytomir of a man suspected of being serial killer. A 500-page indictment with grisly details of the murders of more than 50 people was read to the court.

Anatoli Onoprienko confessed during a two and a half year pre-trial investigation to 52 murders, all but ten of them carried out in a three-month killing spree in the winter of 1995-96, when he rampaged across Ukraine, randomly breaking into houses on the edge of villages and killing all their inhabitants.

Pyotr Shchenko, of the Zhytomir prosecutor's office, said the reading of the formal indictment was expected to take up the first three days of the trial. But there is little doubt about the eventual outcome. Mr Onoprienko, 39, is not expected to contest the charges and has himself said he should be shot.

The defendant sat quietly in an iron cage in the courtroom, dressed in a heavy jacket and woolen hat. Next to him in the cage was Serhiy Rogozin, his alleged accomplice in some of the murders.

Investigators are still anxious to uncover details about Mr Onoprienko's activities in the early 1990s, when he is understood to have roamed Western Europe. They suspect that he carried out more murders during this period.

Arts world finds scholarship for casserole maestro hard to swallow

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

ITALIANS, who tend to take a robust attitude to cooking and eating, were yesterday torn between hilarity and disbelief over the news that a prestigious arts scholarship at the Villa Medici in Rome has been awarded to a chef.

The French Academy in Rome has been housed in the Villa Medi-

ci, on the Pincio Hill above the Spanish Steps, since Napoleon acquired it in 1803. For two centuries the French Government has paid for leading artists, writers and composers to spend up to four years of creative study at the Renaissance villa, with its famed formal gardens of shaded groves and hedged walks.

Former Villa Medici students — known as *pensionnaires* — include

the writer André Malraux, painters such as Ingres and David, Massenet, Berlioz, Debussy and Gounod. But Bruno Racine, the director of the Villa Medici and a passionate gourmet, has long secretly harboured the view that cooking is an art form too.

M Racine yesterday proudly announced that the latest Villa Medici scholar is Xavier Arrey, a rising

star in the kitchens of the Hôtel de Crillon in Paris.

"Mr Arrey is joining a roll of honour that includes great painters and immortal musicians," said *Il Messaggero*, the Rome daily. "Mr Arrey doesn't play the piano, and probably can't even draw a circle with the aid of an upturned wine glass. He uses neither brushes nor pens to express himself. He is an artist of the oven and the casse-

role." Where once Berlioz and Ingres wandered the gardens in straw hats, musing on the classical ruins and statues, the paper said, a cook now searches out herbs and vegetables in his chef's hat and apron. "A soufflé is not an overture, however, and a ragout not the same as a well-constructed play."

Mr Arrey himself appeared oblivious to the controversy as he investigated the Rome street markets, ad-

miring the aubergines and artichokes. "I particularly like the way the Italians work with vegetables," he said, fondling a cauliflower. "And the cheese. Just smell the fragrance of that buffalo mozzarella. Aubergines in breadcrumbs with parmesan cheese — now there's a masterpiece of equilibrium."

He said he had long dreamt of washing his pots and pans in the Tiber. "If he does, his customers

will suffer," said one sceptical restaurateur. "The Tiber has been polluted for years." But *Il Messaggero* was more sympathetic. "We have bravura Italian chefs of great style, but no culinary masters," the paper admitted. "We export pizza, spaghetti and chianti to the world — but we do not export the great culture of Italian cooking, which foreigners who come here seem to appreciate more than we do."



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'Political plot' led to Gaullist suicide

THE theatrical suicide of one of the most powerful officials in southern France was the result of a "political plot", according to his children, who have launched a legal investigation to unravel the mystery of their father's death after finding a bizarre coded message at the dead man's home.

As night fell on November 1, André-Charles Blanc, deputy president of the Alpes-Maritimes regional council and a rising star in the Gaullist RPR party, donned his insignia as a Knight of Malta along with his trademark hat and flowing cape and walked to the cemetery in Théoule-sur-Mer, the Mediterranean town south of Nice which he ruled as Mayor for two decades. At the foot of the town's memorial to the dead, Blanc sat down, pulled out his old service revolver and shot himself in the temple. His death at 55 came just a fortnight after he had announced his intention to stand in the forthcoming election for Mayor of Cannes, but the incident was at first treated as a

Son finds secret code as death riddle deepens, writes Ben Macintyre



Blanc was poised to win Cannes mayoral race

simple, if gruesomely public, suicide brought on by depression, ill-health and a looming corruption scandal — until his children began to investigate. On the dead man's desk his 28-year-old son, Emmanuel, discovered a diary with a

series of nine numbers written on it, lying beside an open book.

By matching the numbers with pages and sentences in the book, the son pieced together what appeared to be a peculiar coded message: "Killed... monument to the dead... cemetery... horror... finished off by pistol shots... we shall depart from this world of highway robbers."

Emmanuel insists that before his death his father had been in high spirits, despite the recent death of his wife from cancer, and was eagerly anticipating the mayoral race in Cannes, one of the most important fiefdoms in the South, which he was widely tipped to win.

"He had been subjected to intense pressure, political pressure... Papa had probably suffered some new and terrible psychological intimidat-

ion that caused him, in the space of a few hours, to take his own life. It was something terrible, but as yet we do not know exactly what," insists his son, who has now filed a formal legal complaint demanding a full investigation and alleging that his father was pushed to suicide by persons unknown.

Blanc, who was known as "The Hat" because of his flamboyant dress sense, was a popular politician first elected to the regional council in 1979 and was regarded as a pivotal local politician in the Gaullist party of President Chirac.

Shortly before his death, however, Blanc had learnt that he was being investigated in connection with a kickback scandal dating from 1992. His family insists he was fully prepared to fight the charges involving a building project.

At the foot of the monument to the dead in Théoule lies a wreath, left by Blanc's two offspring, and tied with a ribbon that reads: "Your honour will be avenged."



A lone commuter consults his timetable at Bordeaux railway station as services were hit by strikers yesterday

Rail passengers left stranded by Euro-strikers

BY BEN MACINTYRE

RAILWAY passengers were left stranded in six European countries yesterday as rail workers mounted a combined "Euro-strike" to protest at de-regulation plans that unions claim will erode jobs.

While the London to Paris Eurostar service was unaffected by the strike, just two out of the 20 London to Brussels Channel Tunnel trains were scheduled to operate and two thirds of all trains in France were put out of action.

In Belgium and Greece, the rail networks were virtually paralysed, while Portuguese workers staged an hour-long stoppage before the evening rush hour. However, in Luxembourg and Spain, where workers also joined the action that was organised by the Federation of Transport Workers' Unions in the European Union, the effects were minimal.

The unions are protesting against European Commission plans to promote privatisation in the freight sector. The plans will be considered by EU transport ministers in Brussels next Monday. Rail workers in Britain, Austria, Germany and The Netherlands also expressed opposition to the moves to open up 25 per cent of the freight market to competition within the next decade, but stopped short of strike action.

"Experience of privatisation in Britain, which has brought poorer services at a higher cost, has convinced railway workers in the rest of Europe that it would be bordering on the insane to follow suit else-

where," said Jimmy Knapp, the General Secretary of the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers.

Neil Kinnock, the EU Transport Commissioner, said in a statement yesterday that the railways' share of freight transport had declined from 32 per cent in 1970 to 14 per cent in 1996, with major job losses due to inefficiency.

"Without change there will be no rail transport in much of the Union by 2012," he said.

The effects of yesterday's strike were most spectacular in Belgium, where 25-mile traffic jams formed outside Brussels during the rush hour as frustrated rail commuters took to their cars.

In France, the SNCF rail network reported that only one in three trains was operating nationwide, with even fewer on suburban commuter lines. Buses were laid on to ferry stranded passengers from Paris to Brussels, Amsterdam and Cologne in place of the high-speed Thalys trains.

The co-ordinated stoppages were hailed by some as proof that the trans-European strike is now a reality.

Madrid: Spanish officials have unveiled a \$2.2 billion (£1.3 billion) plan to ease the traffic woes of the capital with a network of underground highways.

The plans include a circular road under the city centre with 12 arterial roads, 165ft underground, radiating from it. The scheme is expected to take between eight and ten years to complete. (AP)

Dramatic gesture a first for Stoppard



Stoppard following in Shakespeare's footsteps

Paris: Tom Stoppard will become the first living foreign playwright to have his work performed at the Comédie Française when his play *Arcadia* opens at the French national theatre here on Thursday (Ben Macintyre writes).

The theatre has hitherto shunned the work of foreign authors until they are safely dead, and both Chris Smith, the Culture Minister, and his French opposite number, Catherine Trautmann, will be present, along with Mr Stoppard, at a special performance on November 30 to mark this dramatic departure from tradition. "The lifting of the ban on living foreign authors, if the play is of genuine value, is the result of a statute passed by the Comédie Française in 1995," Jean-Pierre Miquel, the theatre's administrator, said.

Mr Stoppard follows the venerable path of Shakespeare and Sheridan, whose work was performed at the theatre in the 19th century, but unlike them the 61-year-old author will be on hand to see his own work.

The restriction on living foreign authors, which for 30 years has amounted to a virtual ban on all non-French playwrights, was designed to protect France's writers from cum-

petition from abroad. But M Miquel emphasised that the Stoppard decision was a reflection of the worth of his play and not a political gesture.

Arcadia, which was written in 1993, was first performed in French at the Vieux Colombier theatre in Paris at the start of the year.

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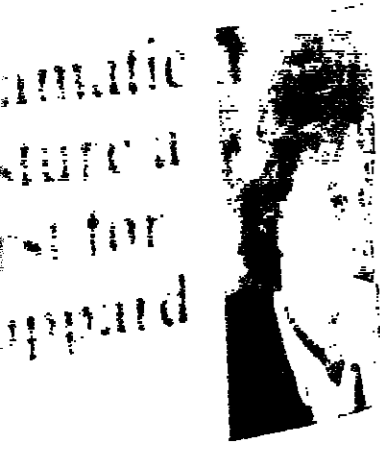
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Iraqis want Saddam tried

Britain backs plan to indict the dictator for war crimes amid new signs of opposition, writes Michael Binyon

BRITAIN yesterday called a meeting of Iraqi opposition leaders to co-ordinate attempts to topple President Saddam Hussein, only 24 hours after a senior Iraqi politician was reported to have escaped an assassination attempt.

After the meeting, Derek Fatchett, a Foreign Office Minister, said Britain would support a campaign to indict Saddam for crimes against humanity. Mr Fatchett said the leaders of 16 Iraqi opposition groups had suggested the campaign, for which there was plenty of evidence from Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the use of chemical weapons

against Iraqi Kurds. "I think it's obvious the crimes have been committed by this leadership," Mr Fatchett said. "I think the campaign is a strong one and one which the international community would find extremely attractive."

The meeting, the first of a series, follows a promise by Britain and America to step up active support for Iraqi opposition groups and seek Saddam's overthrow. The divided opposition is largely based in London, and Britain is anxious to find common ground among the exile groups.

The official Iraqi News Agency meanwhile reported

that an attempt was made on the life of Izzat Ibrahim, vice-president of the Revolutionary Command Council, in southern Iraq on Sunday. Mr Ibrahim "was the target of a cowardly assassination attempt in the town of Karbala", a Shia stronghold 60 miles south of Baghdad. The Revolutionary Command Council is the country's highest authority. Immediately after the 1991 Gulf War, the Shia rose in a revolt which was brutally suppressed. Two leading Shia activists were recently executed and the Foreign Office cited this as evidence that opposition to Saddam was growing.

Mr Fatchett said it was almost impossible to argue that Iraq without Saddam would not be a better country. "A change of regime would have to be better for the ordinary people of Iraq," he said. If and when that happened, it would be extremely useful to have the opposition groups working together "so Baghdad does not fall into chaos and anarchy".

The groups represented yesterday included the main umbrella organisations, such as the Iraqi National Congress, as well as Kurdish, monarchist, Islamist and liberal groups. Several said the meeting had been "very useful" although Mr Fatchett gave no specific commitments on military or financial support.

"I think all the members of the opposition were pleased with the meeting," Sharif Ali of the Constitutional Monarchist Movement said.

Washington has approved a \$97 million (£60.5 million) aid package to support Iraqi dissidents, and has held talks with Ahmad Chalabi, head of the



Izzat Ibrahim, vice-president of Iraq's Revolutionary Command Council, who was reported to have survived a weekend assassination attempt south of Baghdad

Iraqi National Congress. Mr Fatchett told the groups that events were moving quickly and they needed to respond. Today they will have talks in London with American officials. Several groups voiced

distrust of Western promises. Nabil Mousseawi, a senior member of the Iraqi National Congress, said: "We don't want them [the US and Britain] to drop their commitments when things get too hot

for them. We had this experience in the past." □ Baghdad: Saddam was named "Man of the Century" by the Iraqi-Indian Friendship Association, the Baghdad Observer reported. (AFP)

Baghdad rejects UN dossier call

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

IRAQ raised the stakes in its confrontation with the United Nations yesterday by flatly rejecting the chief weapons inspector's request for documents and access to archives.

The UN Security Council is expected today to discuss Iraq's continued defiance, with friendly countries such as Russia echoing Baghdad's view that the UN inspectors were being "provocative".

Iraq spelled out its position in an 18-page letter from Tariq Aziz, the Deputy Prime Minister, in what appeared to be a calculated affront to Britain and the US, which called off air strikes at the last moment on November 14 when Baghdad promised to resume co-operation with the UN Special

Commission. The two powers now face the difficult task of rebuilding support on the Security Council for any military action against Iraq, with some members now ready to press on with a "comprehensive review" of UN policy that could offer the Iraqi regime new concessions.

Although the UN inspectors consider that Iraqi documents are the key to uncovering the country's hidden weapons programmes, Baghdad has sought to portray the search for paperwork as a distraction from the main business of disarmament.

Richard Butler, the chief UN inspector, had requested 12 specific categories of documents from Iraq as the first test of compliance after Baghdad backed down in the face of threatened air strikes.

Netanyahu vows to implement next West Bank pullout

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

THE Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, pledged yesterday on the eve of talks in London that Israel would press ahead with the second withdrawal from the occupied West Bank in six weeks, despite deep Cabinet divisions and opposition from settlers.

He praised his British counterpart

for his backing when "cynics and sceptics" were predicting that last Friday's West Bank withdrawal would not take place. "Tony Blair, in particular, has been very helpful and very supportive," Mr Netanyahu said.

The Israeli leader, who will attend a private Downing Street dinner, said he would discuss new defence co-operation schemes with Britain outlined in a controversial accord signed last week. Mr Netanyahu

used a briefing with British correspondents to dismiss stories in the Hebrew press that he has already decided to invite the opposition Labour Party into a National Unity Government or call an early general election because of right-wing hostility to last month's Wye peace accord.

Referring to the narrow 7.5 Cabinet majority for last Friday's troop withdrawal and reports that he will be unable to secure even such a narrow ma-

ajority for the second of the three pullouts, Mr Netanyahu insisted that if the Palestinians stuck to their agreements, the Wye process would continue. "What you can see from this narrow margin of approval in the Cabinet is the importance, the premium, that the ministers will attach to rigorous compliance by the Palestinian Authority to the agreement," he said.

The Israeli leader, who will be accompanied by his wife, Sara, ruled

out a compromise on Israel's vow to keep large areas of Arab territories conquered in 1967 under any final peace treaty, which the Oslo accord says must be reached by May 1999.

He also rejected Palestinian claims that he had agreed in America to release large numbers of "political" prisoners in the negotiated total of 750. Only a limited number of security prisoners who did not have "Israeli blood" on their hands would be freed.

WORLD IN BRIEF

European cold snap kills 62

An Arctic cold wave and accompanying blizzards have killed at least 62 people throughout Europe, according to police and media reports. The weather played a role in at least 24 deaths in Romania and Bulgaria over the past three days. In Poland, 32 people died, most of them homeless.

In France, the death toll rose yesterday to six people, three of them homeless men. Fountains in front of the Eiffel Tower were frozen, and in Mouthe, in eastern France, temperatures fell to -21C (-6F). About 100 homeless people staged a sit-in at the headquarters of the state-run medical assistance service in Paris to demand better protection in winter. (AP)

Kabila seeks EU allies

Nairobi: President Kabila of the Democratic Republic of Congo has started a tour of Europe in the hope of gaining support for his beleaguered regime (David Orr writes). He is due to meet President Scalfaro of Italy and the Pope today before travelling on to Belgium and France. In the Congolese capital, Kinshasa, it was reported that Mr Kabila's Zimbabwian military allies had killed 600 rebels in airstrikes on barges on Lake Tanganyika.

Threat to Kurdish TV

London: A Kurdish television station based in Britain was told that it would lose its licence if it did not improve the balance of its political coverage (Michael Binyon writes). The station, Med TV, has been accused of broadcasting propaganda on behalf of the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK), and in January it was fined £90,000 by the Independent Television Commission for three breaches of impartiality requirements. Yesterday's warning followed further complaints.

Ankara clears leaders

Ankara: Mesut Yilmaz, the Turkish Prime Minister, and Tansu Ciller, right, who was the country's first woman Prime Minister, were cleared by parliamentary commissions of corruption concerning their personal fortunes, a parliamentary source said. The panels decided there was insufficient evidence to endorse Finance Ministry claims that Mr Yilmaz and Mrs Ciller had amassed assets illegally. (AFP)



Tirana protest alert

Tirana: Sali Berisha, Albania's fiery chief opposition leader, called on his supporters to "fill the streets of Tirana" to protest against the Government's apparent victory in persuading voters to back a Western-style constitution. After Mr Berisha's comments, dozens of police vehicles filled the central Skanderbeg Square, which was the scene of rioting and gunfire in September after the assassination of Adem Hajdari, a prominent member of Mr Berisha's Democratic Party. (AFP)

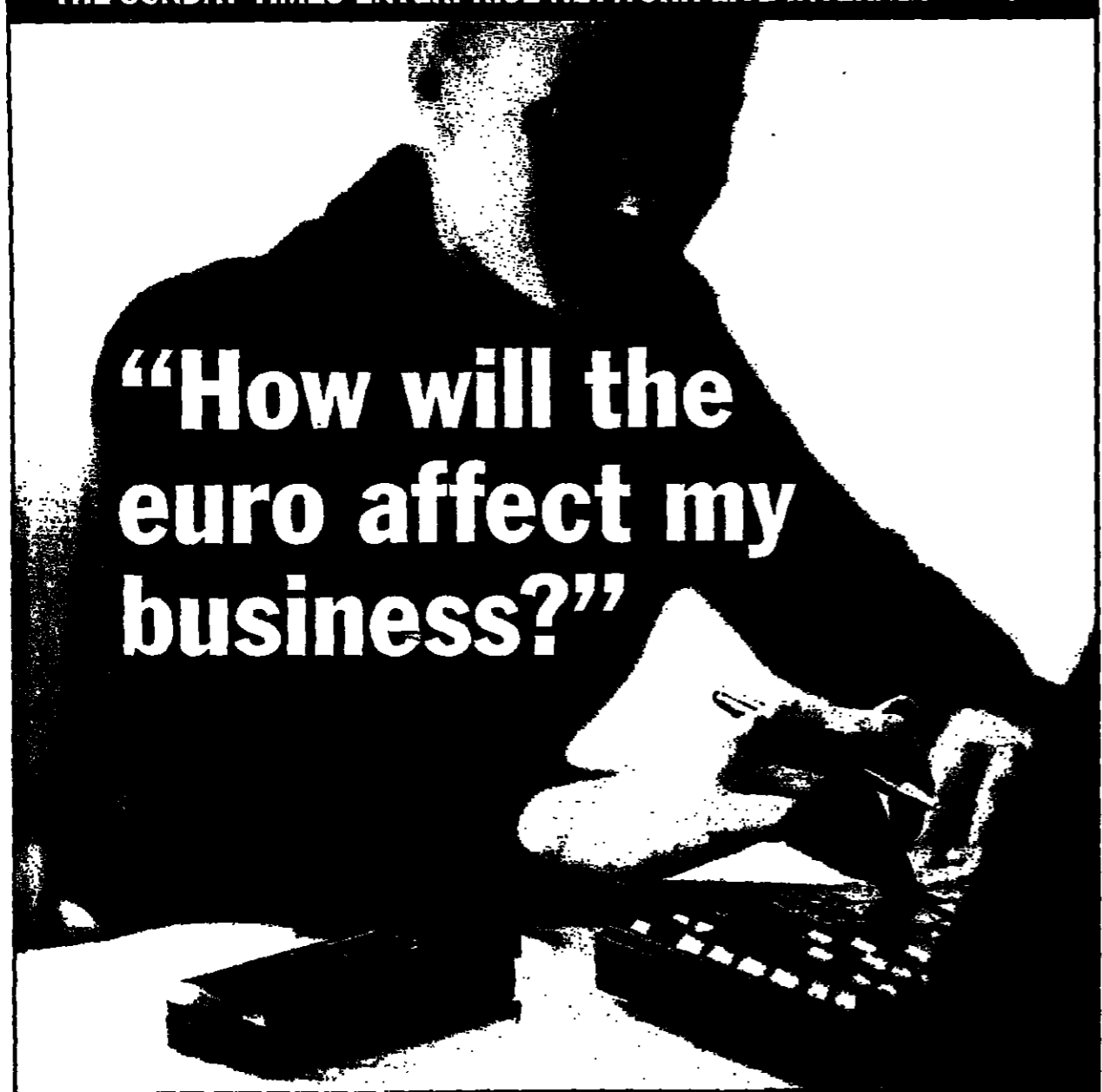
Rapists beheaded

Jeddah: Two Saudi men convicted of raping and strangling a teenage boy were beheaded in the western resort town of Taif. The two men were hitchhiking and were given a ride by the young victim, the official Saudi Press Agency said. After driving to an isolated place and drinking alcohol, forbidden under Islam and banned in Saudi Arabia, they raped and strangled the young man, poured petrol over the corpse and set it on fire before escaping. (AP)

Berlin move begins

Berlin: The office of President Herzog of Germany moved to Berlin, becoming the first federal agency to shift from Bonn to the designated new capital. Parliament, Gerhard Schröder, the Chancellor, and most ministries are scheduled to move next September from Bonn, the capital of the former West Germany. The new oval-shaped office building cost DM94 million (£33 million) and took two years to complete. The building includes busts of previous Presidents. (Reuters)

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Millennium suicide sect found in Israel

FROM ROSS DUNN IN JERUSALEM

ISRAELI police have discovered members of a missing American Christian doomsday sect in Jerusalem, where they are suspected of planning a mass suicide to coincide with the start of the new millennium.

About 72 members of the Colorado-based cult known as the Concerned Christians disappeared last month after their leader, Monte Kim Miller, prophesied the apocalyptic destruction of Denver by an earthquake. Although the promised calamity did not happen, many had already sold their belongings and some headed to Israel.

Mr Miller has said he will die in the streets of Jerusalem in December 1999 and be resurrected three days later. A spokeswoman for the Israeli police said a special unit was set up several months ago to deal with messianic sects that might try to create public disturbances as the turn of the century approaches.

A Foreign Ministry official said there was concern about who might enter the Holy Land to mark the start of the new millennium and the Government was attempting to monitor visitors. Experts and relatives of

members of the cult group believe that Mr Miller, 44, who claims that God speaks through him, has the power to persuade his followers to take their own lives.

An Israeli police official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said it was not known what the cult members were doing, and whether they posed a threat to themselves or others. "It is not so clear what they want to do. Their ideas have not crystallised," the official said.

Bill Honsberger, a Denver cult expert, said the sect would probably move on now that some of its members had been found, and try to set up a new base elsewhere.

The discovery of the cult members comes amid fears that religious extremists might try to blow up the Temple Mount in the Old City of Jerusalem.

About 88 million has been approved to improve security at the site by deploying 430 police officers and installing electronic surveillance equipment. The site housed the Jewish Temple in biblical times, but is now the home of the Muslim holy shrines, al-Aqsa mosque and the Dome of the Rock.

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Beijing lauds Mao's victim as hero

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN BEIJING

CHINA today marks the centenary of the birth of the chief victim of the Cultural Revolution, Liu Shaoqi, and has been hearing eulogies for the former President who was once the country's most powerful man after Chairman Mao.

But amid the genuine grieving for a Communist leader who is said to have abhorred violence, no one dares to say almost 30 years later that Mao was responsible for Liu's agonising death.

Liu's widow, Madam Wang Guangmei, now China's most admired woman, wrote yesterday: "In the days full of pain and torture we supported each other and comforted each other. I feel very sad for Shaoqi, but also proud that I experienced everything with him."

Liu — Mao's close comrade-in-arms and chosen successor — became during what is now called the "ten years of madness" the "Number One Capitalist Roader" and was tortured and humiliated by Red Guards, as was his wife.

Mao believed Liu was part of a leadership clique intent on whittling away his power after the famines caused by his failed Great Leap Forward.

Liu was arrested, tortured, expelled from the Communist Party, and sent to a remote city. He died in 1969 of untreated pneumonia on the concrete basement floor of a local government office, and was cremated anonymously. No one knew his fate for years, though he was posthumously rehabilitated in 1980.

His widow, now 77, was honoured at the weekend at a gathering attended by President Jiang Zemin and 6,000 guests in the Great Hall of the People. Last night, however, she was in a Beijing hospital suffering from exhaustion.

During the meeting, President Jiang hailed Liu as "a great Marxist, proletarian statesman and theorist... who is loved by the party, the army and the people even today".

'Playboy cop' exposes art fraud riddle

A \$17.5m 'theft' of masterpieces has perplexed police, writes Giles Whittell

AN alleged fraud involving \$17.5 million (£10.9 million) and the bogus theft of paintings by Monet and Picasso has been uncovered thanks to a tip-off from a former California policewoman, who made her name shedding her uniform for Playboy.

Dr Steven Cooperman, a retired eye surgeon, had a taste for French Impressionists. In a break in a case that has baffled the FBI for years, he stands accused of having two historic canvasses "stolen" from his Los Angeles home. Having bought Claude Monet's Customs Officer's Cabin at Pourville and Pablo Picasso's Nude Before a Mirror for

under \$1 million each in the 1980s, he managed to insure them, with the help of a museum's loan receipt, for a total of \$12.5 million. They vanished from his home the following summer. Despite suspicious circumstances, including no sign of forced entry and an

alarm that failed to go off, Dr Cooperman claimed the paintings' full insured value. When his insurers refused to pay he sued them, eventually settling out of court for a reported \$17.5 million. He retired, rich, to seaside Connecticut.

Meanwhile, the former wife of his lawyer's ex-partner had been talking to the FBI. Robert Vasquez, known to ardent fans as the first California Highway Patrol officer to strip for Playboy, had given up modelling and gone to college.

Facing mounting bills, when she learnt that her husband might have been involved in a "theft" for which a \$250,000 reward was now being offered, she turned him in.

James Little, a failed actor-turned-lawyer, has been the FBI's main witness in the case since the paintings turned up last year wrapped in blankets in an air-conditioned storage locker rented in his name in Cleveland. Police say that he received them from his former partner, whose clients happened to include the wealthy Dr Cooperman. Facing up to 120 years in jail if convicted, Dr Cooperman has vowed to fight all 16 federal counts against him.

In the meantime, interest has intensified in the helpful Ms Vasquez. A former actress



Monet's Customs Officer's Cabin at Pourville, one of the paintings reported stolen

as well as model, her film credits include Picasso Trigger, a 1988 B-movie about a psychotic art collector who is foiled, the production notes explain, "by our hero and his team of beauties".

Ms Vasquez has claimed that money had nothing to do with her decision to give Mr Little's name to the Los Angeles Police Department's art theft unit. "I didn't do it for any reward situation; I just wanted him away from me," she told the Cleveland Plain Dealer, only to admit in the next breath: "Honestly, \$250,000 would be great. It would pay for my college."

She has several rivals. Pamela Davis, Mr Little's current fiancée, claims to be the one

who led the FBI to the Cleveland storage facility, while a local builder has hired a former judge to sue for the reward after having a chance conversation about the paintings with Ms Davis in a bar and passing on what he heard to federal agents. One character out of

shaved of all body hair for a court appearance on cocaine charges.

The bald look was apparently a ploy to foil an imminent drug test for which a hair sample would have been taken. The judge at Mr Little's trial called his relationship with Ms Davis a "fatal attraction".

The disgraced lawyer still displayed a touching faith in his girlfriend's motives. "I believe Pam Davis has been irreparably harmed by these paintings," he said. "I believe that if she gets any money from them, she will donate 100 per cent of it to the American Cancer Society in her grandmother's name and the name of my mother." Ms Davis's response at the time: "No comment."

'I didn't do it for a reward, but \$250,000 would be great. It would pay for my college'

TV death doctor invites test case

By DAMIAN WHITWORTH

PROSECUTORS are reviewing macabre footage shown on prime-time American television in which Dr Jack Kevorkian administered a lethal injection to a terminally ill patient.

The "mercy killing" advocate has challenged the legal authorities to charge him over the death of the man to ensure a legal showdown on the controversial issues of euthanasia and assisted suicide.

On the CBS 60 Minutes programme on Sunday night, the retired pathologist, who has admitted helping 120 people to take their own lives, was seen in a video injecting Thomas Youk with a series of drugs. Mr Youk, in the advanced stages of Lou Gehrig's disease, could hardly speak or move. He was seen to let his chin fall on to his chest. Asked if he was awake, he did not respond. Dr Kevorkian was heard to say that Mr Youk was "a straight line".

Interviewed on the programme, Dr Kevorkian was asked if he had killed Mr Youk. "I did," he said, and went on to explain that it was the first time he had committed euthanasia. Previously, he had only helped other people to take their lives, and has been acquitted in three wrongful death trials. "I want a showdown," said Dr Kevorkian, 70, who added that if convicted he would starve himself to death in prison.



Vasquez in Playboy. She reported her ex-husband

Pentagon seeks unilateral nuclear disarmament to cut costs

FROM DAMIAN WHITWORTH IN WASHINGTON

THE Pentagon wants to begin a unilateral reduction of America's nuclear arsenal to save on the multi-billion dollar cost of maintaining warheads. Officials have quietly urged the Clinton Administration to make cuts because it faces a huge bill for weapons that should already have been scrapped after agreements signed with Russia.

Under the terms of the Start I and Start II strategic arms reduction treaties, America and Russia agreed to slash their arsenals of nuclear warheads. But the Russian parliament

has refused to approve Start II, forcing an expensive delay in disarmament. Pentagon officials have told President Clinton that a unilateral reduction of the arsenal to fewer than 6,000 warheads would not have an adverse effect on America's ability to deter a nuclear threat, according to a report in The New York Times yesterday.

Because of the Russian delay, America has spent an extra \$95 million (£55 million) in the past two years in maintaining weapons. The Pentagon believes that next year it will spend another \$100 million and billions more to refuel nuclear reactors and provide new missiles on Tri-

dent submarines if the delay continues. A senior White House official told the newspaper that neither Mr Clinton, nor William Cohen, his Defence Secretary, has made a decision on the Pentagon's recommendations and would not do so until Russia's parliament completes its deliberations on Start II.

There is optimism among some in the Pentagon that the dire state of the Russian economy makes it impossible to maintain a nuclear force as large as that allowed under Start I. Following the signing of that treaty in 1991, America reduced its arm-

our forces and maybe streamline our forces to some degree," he said. □ Bonn: The new German Government was yesterday heading for its first major argument with the United States as Rudolf Scharping, the Social Democrat Defence Minister, sought to persuade Washington that nuclear weapons should only be used in retaliation and never as a first strike (Roger Boyes writes).

William Cohen, the US Defence Secretary, rejected the idea the Nato should amend its policy, saying ambiguity was integral to alliance strategy. Mr Cohen, who is due to meet with Scharping today, said the policy was in no need of revision.

heads from more than 10,000 to 7,000. Under Start II, both countries would be allowed a maximum of 6,000 warheads, and in 1997 Mr Clinton and Mr Yeltsin agreed that once Start II was ratified they would begin talks on a further reduction to between 2,000 and 2,500.

While officials remained tight-lipped about the highly classified report, which was passed to the White House in April, Admiral Richard Mies, the new commander of the strategic arsenal, suggested in an interview that the cuts could be forthcoming. "I think you will inevitably see us take some unilateral actions that we have to take to modernise



Scharping: no first use

Advertisement for Braun Oral-B plaque removers. Text: 'A beautiful set of pearls for only £19.99.' Includes image of the product and 'Half price' tag.

Advertisement for SkyDigital packages. Text: 'SkyDigital packages from £6.99 per month'. Includes details about channels, installation, and contact information.

The stigma that never goes away

To be honest, I had given up on my gums. They seemed a less than essential part of my anatomy. If you don't keep your gums in shape, they may cause trouble later in life. But until recently I didn't honestly think that there would be a "later in life".

In the past few days a new dentist has changed all that. She looked in my mouth and grimaced, and that was enough. A failing immune system is a recipe for all sorts of disasters, but this one wasn't life-threatening, so I had never taken it very seriously.

It also came down to the vexed question of which dentist to see, because shortly after I learnt that I was HIV positive, in spring 1993, I went for a routine check-up.

"Um, I'd better tell you that I have HIV," I said hesitantly. The dentist looked in my mouth and then looked grave. "Well, you do need work," he said, "but we'd better do it at the end of the day." It turned out that this was so he could sterilise all his equipment afterwards.

"You mean you don't do that with every-

Next Tuesday is World Aids Day. Radio 4 presenter Nigel Wrench, who has Aids, says attitudes are changing — but not as quickly as the treatment that has transformed his life



Nigel Wrench: "The terror runs deep. When I developed fully blown Aids three years ago, I found the word impossible to say"

I think it would have been easier if it had been cancer

one?" I asked, filled with anger. There is nothing like a terminal illness to make you lose your inhibitions about getting angry in public. My dentist mumbled something inadequate, and I left the surgery in a huff.

I never went back, and maybe his attitude coloured my approach to caring for my gums. The dentist had put into words what many people still feel: Aids is an illness to be kept at arm's length. Its unique link between death and sex — and homosexual sex at that — ensures that the stigma remains.

The terror runs deep. When I developed fully blown Aids three years ago, I found the word impossible to say. I was in a hospital bed, attached to a drip, occasionally gasping for an oxygen mask, ill with PCP, the pneumonia that killed so many people in the first years of the epidemic.

One of my aunts said the word first, on the phone from Shropshire, while I was in the Royal Free Hospital in London.

"So you have Aids now," she said bluntly. I couldn't reply and left one of my friends, usefully a trained social worker, to finish the conversation. That friend was a central part of my gay family, the key

emotional support at a time when all the books that I foolishly read and reread suggested that I might have as little as nine months to live. "Or maybe two years," said a doctor chirpily when I once asked him the forbidden "how long will I live?" question.

Such answers are no longer a shock to our community. For gay people, Aids isn't a stranger but a familiar intruder. It has

hurt or killed someone close to all of us. For gay men, this is a virus whose presence, spoken or unspoken, is there during sex, the most intimate act of our lives. The virus draws people closer and forces conversation about issues that you wouldn't otherwise confront. After all, beyond life, sex and death, what is there?

I sometimes think it would have been easier if it was another sort of terminal ill-

ness, such as cancer. Cancer can be the result of a lifetime's smoking; I became HIV positive after one incidence of unsafe sex. But no one, quite rightly, judges cancer. There's no one to say, as someone once said to me: "It's your own fault then."

Parents might still be frightened, but there would at least be ways to understand: ways that don't involve understanding homosexuality into the bargain.

For my mother, living alone in a fishing village near Cape Town, Aids is terrifying. I'm the only gay man she knows, and the only person with Aids she knows, despite the fact that South Africa has one of the highest infection rates in the world.

The easy thing has been to keep the effects of Aids as distant from her as possible. Questions of sex are avoided, as are questions about how I contracted it in the

first place. It's an elaborate dance, but one that has become so much easier with the latest drug treatments.

As I left hospital, in January 1994, those treatments simply bought extra time, not life. You would hope for new drugs to buy even more time. What did the nausea they caused matter if I was feeling better? Who cared if one of the drugs brought on peripheral neuropathy, a numbness in my feet caused by irreversible nerve damage? It was all in the cause of "a window of good health", as one of my friends put it.

In the early Nineties those windows closed all the time. After six months, the virus adapted to the drugs I was on. The familiar symptoms returned: fatigue, irritability, loss of appetite, weight loss. The blood tests confirmed the obvious — this most versatile of viruses had become resistant to the drugs.

It was the snappily titled protease inhibitors, named after the enzyme they attack, that gave me my life back. Six Ritonavir each dose, three Saquinavir, plus an AZT

The virus is in my blood, but it's simply biding its time

to stop the virus from getting into my brain, a 3TC because it can't do any harm, and a capsule of Septrin to stop me getting PCP again. It's a pot of lucky charms, to be taken twice a day.

Two years on, I'm part of an informal global experiment in keeping Aids victims alive. The virus is undetectable in my blood, but as far as I'm concerned it's simply hiding, biding its time.

The side-effects of the drugs are only one problem Aids patients face; no one knows the consequences of keeping this intruder at bay with potentially toxic drugs for five or ten years. This crisis is not over. This is just a lull.

But at least these days when I see my mother I can tell the truth. I no longer need to protect her against terrible realities. I can say "I am living with Aids and I'm living a full life", and mean it.

And my new dentist, the one who thinks my gums are a disgrace, doesn't insist on seeing me after all her other patients have gone. Some things are changing.

● Aids and Me, featuring Nigel Wrench, his friends, family and doctor, is broadcast on Radio 4 tomorrow at 11am.

Pete was destined to go to university. A-level time stretched his psyche to breaking point but he completed the exams and won his place. The tension, however, had been too much because he cracked before the university term started. Pete donned a helmet and leathers rather than mortar board and gown; instead of climbing the academic ladder and becoming a respectable graduate, he became a Hell's Angel.

Pete's breakdown was attributed to a form of depression. In his case, as well as

Drugs to ease the terror

depression it included drug abuse and wildly psychotic delusions and beliefs. Pete was mad, had and dangerous to know; his antisocial behaviour included a large measure of violence. He was threatening and violent to others and also self-destructive. His conversation was not reassuring. It centred almost entirely around his thoughts, and they dwelled on the bizarre — he

was preoccupied with space and the supernatural. Pete's associates may have thought that he was suffering from a depressive illness but his doctors realised that this was only part of the picture. He was also schizophrenic, and unfortunately he prescribed old-style antipsychotic drugs. Pete rejected these; they made him so tired and leaden that even if his lack of

co-ordination and blurred vision hadn't prevented him from riding his motorbike, he wouldn't have had the energy to do so. With the blurred vision came a mouth so dry that his tongue stuck to the roof of his mouth. He also claimed that he couldn't think properly and that he was confused. He was lucky — he avoided the more serious side-effects of traditional antipsychotic drugs: Parkinson-type symptoms, severe agitation and muscle spasms.

MEDICINE CHEST

DR THOMAS STUTTAFOORD

Ministers, civil servants, doctors, social workers, patients' families and, not least, patients, are united in their belief that when someone with schizophrenia is taking the correct treatment, their life is often bearable. Otherwise they become the victim of unimaginable horrors. Most patients become frightened mice, terrified by their delusions. And, because of the difficulties they have in ordinary social life, they are usually self-effacing and retiring. Nonetheless, some are driven to violence by their disordered thoughts, and Pete was one.

Pete is a good example of the value of the new-style atypical neuroleptic drugs available, and his life has been transformed. He is now helping other patients to come to terms with their troubles and is persuading them to persevere with their treatment.

The terror of the motorway café is now the darling of the day hospital, thanks to new

known as risperidone, Zyprexa (olanzapine), Seroquel (quetiapine), Serolect (serindole) and Solian (amisulpride).

Dr Mike Launer, a consultant psychiatrist, is clinical director of the Burnley NHS trust. He looks after 120 patients taking clozapine and more than 200 on the other new-style neuroleptics. Each of these new drugs has its own strengths and weaknesses. His unit is a centre of excellence in dealing with patients reluctant to take old-style antipsychotic drugs.

Marjorie Wallace, of the mental health charity SANE, says that 75 per cent of a sample of psychiatrists interviewed were so rationed that they were unable to prescribe atypical neuroleptics rather than old-style antipsychotic therapy. She adds: "Getting people to take atypical neuroleptics early is the most important step in their treatment. Without providing the money, any government proposals for the future of the psychiatric services will never work."

"The only safe alternative would be to reopen, expensively, the acute beds already closed. One in seven schizophrenic patients commits suicide — this medication is life-saving."

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The image of Blair is a woman-friendly... heading a... So why are there so many women in his cabinet? Grace Bradberry exp

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Blair's laddish new Labour



The image of Tony Blair is of a woman-friendly politician heading a feminised party. So why are there so few women in his Cabinet? Grace Bradberry reports



Ladies' day: Tony Blair with some of the 101 female MPs voted in at the last election. Many feel it is time for Labour to stop listening to women and start acting on their behalf

Who can't recall the picture of Blair and his "babes"? Here was a woman-friendly politician, heading a feminised party, who was to do wonders for the female half of the population. Women voters seem to have bought the image. The last election saw an 11 per cent swing from Conservative to Labour among female voters. For the first time in years women's support for the party (44 per cent) was almost on a par with that of men (45 per cent). In the 1992 poll women were 8 percentage points less likely to vote Labour than men, and his gap cost the party the election.



Diane Abbott: reshuffle was "blow to women"

But the image is not necessarily the reality. A few dissenting voices say new Labour is not at all feminised. Diane Abbott, the maverick left-wing MP for Hackney North & Stoke Newington, was the first to suggest that the Blair mission was a "Boys Own project". Speaking after the last reshuffle she noted that no high-spending Cabinet post was filled by a woman. Harriet Harman had been dismissed from Social Security and Margaret Beckett had been moved from the Department of Trade and Industry to become the Leader of the House. Then Helen Wilkinson of the think-tank Demos, writing in New Statesman, condemned Labour's male culture. Even strong supporters of the Blair Government privately describe the inner circle as "laddish". Within No 10's poli-

tical appointees is a woman (Liz Lloyd, 27, who covers agriculture, the environment and home affairs). There is also a civil servant, Sharon White (social security). The rest are the smart young men in suits synonymous with new Labour. Also close to Blair is Anji Hunter, his special adviser, whom he has known since school, and Sally Morgan, his political secretary. But when one thinks of new Labour's in-

ner circle one thinks of men: Alistair Campbell, Peter Mandelson, Gordon Brown, Charlie Whelan and Jonathan Powell. Margaret McDonagh, the first female General Secretary, is certainly powerful, but her role is primarily organisational. Then there are those who say that Labour's women MPs are not necessarily concerned with delivering for women. "They see themselves as politicians first, women second," says Helen Carey, the National Federation of Women's Institutes' representative on the Women's National Commis-

When one thinks of Labour's inner circle one thinks of men

sion. "They were elected by women for women," she insists. Actually, there's no real evidence for this. Carey is among those who point out that Labour selling its message to women voters is quite separate from delivering women-friendly policies. "I haven't seen anything tangible coming out of this feminisation of the party," she says. The relaunch of the Women's Unit this month seems to back this up. Baroness Jay of Paddington and Tessa Jowell, who took over from Harriet Harman and Joan Ruddock after the reshuffle, outlined 18 achievements to date. Critics note that if the unit has been so successful, why the need for a relaunch? There was a good deal of "spin" beforehand, notably a story about Geri Halliwell and Emma Thompson being role models for teenage girls. But fresh from a photo call at a London school, where teenage girls had said they were building on Harriet Harman's excellent work not changing direction. (Harman is said to have been hurt that women she deemed friends might be connected with briefings against her.) Still, the news release was headed "Government announces new priorities for women". Both ministers said they had been doing something else when 1970s feminism was going on. Lady Jay had been raising children. Jowell campaigning for the rights of people in mental hospitals. Certainly the former has never shown much interest in sexual politics, but Jowell is deemed rather more of a feminist.

Regarding the "no 1970s feminism" diatribe she said "Well, it

didn't come from us as women's minister" before reiterating: "We must deliver practical policies that will make a difference to women's lives."

Strictly speaking, the Women's Unit cannot deliver policies. It has a budget of £1.5 million and just 40 civil servants; as such it is a "task force". In Lady Jay's terminology, it puts its "name tape" to policies that are then implemented by the heads of big-budget ministries — provided those heads, all men, agree. The "Better for Women, Better for All" slogan on the unit's literature is something that not only the electorate but male colleagues may have to be convinced of.

A main function of the unit is research. "Listening to Women" is a key project. But there are rumblings among women's groups that the Government has done enough listening and should start acting. When I asked Jowell why there had to be so much listening, she offered three reasons: "You constantly need to subject what the Government is doing to the reactions of those on the receiving end. It's also a way of judging the relevance and importance of new policy. But there's a third point: people value being asked their opinion and then seeing the consultation they've been part of shaping how policy is delivered." This last sounds like a PR campaign, a full-time mission to woo voters.

In fact, Tessa Jowell conducted a similar exercise in 1995 when, as Shadow Women's Minister, she toured Britain inviting members of the Women's Institute, National Council of Women and Townswomen's Guilds to social meetings — where she learnt it wasn't issues such as sexism and rape that women wanted to raise, but the burden of looking after elderly relatives and the struggle to find childcare.

Is it fair to be cynical about Labour's commitment to women? Gwyneth Dunwoody, an old Labour woman, did not support a separate Women's Unit. As an erstwhile member of the National Executive Committee, she pushed for there to be a civil servant in each department checking that legislation was woman-friendly. Jowell, Shadow Women's Minister, scrapped the plan for "sex spies".

Still, Dunwoody is enthusiastic about what is happening in Whitehall. "There has been a positive encouragement in those things that do matter most to women. Though there are still great lacunae." As the chairwoman of the Transport Select Committee she has found herself "pushing on an open door" when she talks of the problems for women of unmanned stations. "Now I could have said that until I was blue in the face to the previous transport minister." She is less sanguine about some of the new intake of Labour women, not because a few are "quota women" (though she did oppose all-female shortlists) but because "some have still to establish

themselves as individuals, and may find at the next election that having been part of a tightly disciplined group may not be to their advantage."

Melanie Johnson, MP for Welwyn Hatfield, might seem to be among this group. Meeting her at the Labour conference, I found her certainly on message: in the face of scepticism from an executive of the charity Scope, she stated her belief that Alistair Darling's intentions on social security for the disabled would be nothing but honourable, even if he had come from the Treasury.

Ms Johnson is being mentioned as a possible candidate for promotion. A former Oxfordshire County Councillor, she endured a nasty election cam-

paign in which the sitting Tory, David Evans, called her three children bastards. I wondered if, as a new Labour woman, she felt she had access to the heart of Government. "Tony has been very good at seeing people at these No 10 briefings," she says. "He has 20 MPs for round-table talks. There is also a lot of access through the lobby system."

Other aspects of the lobby system are less popular with the new women. "There's a complete calmness about making decisions in the middle of the night, for which nobody bothers to adduce any sensible arguments, except we have always done it that way," says Fiona Macgarratt, MP

for Slough, who was one of the first of the new intake to be promoted, becoming parliamentary private secretary to Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary.

Modernising the House is something the Labour Government had been expected to do. First it was Ann Taylor's task as Leader of the House. She is now Chief Whip, and the baton has been passed to Margaret Beckett. "I think [Beckett] has less passion for it than Ann," says Macgarratt. "But we will still make progress."

With refreshing honesty, Macgarratt admits she was a feminist in the 1970s, but adds: "I wore make-up and high heels." As for the buzz about "no 1970s feminism", she hasn't heard it but says: "What it might be saying is that there

is nothing to fear. Feminism is liberating for all of humanity." But is there nothing to fear? Though Diane Abbott thought the last reshuffle a blow for women, male backbenchers complained at the number of women given junior posts. And some of those women will presumably work their way higher up. Having expounded her belief that full opportunities for women mean better lives for all, Macgarratt understands men's anxiety: "One thing clearly demonstrated in the idea of women-only shortlists is that when women start getting their fingers on the handles of power, men have to shift their little chance of this happening at the heart of the Labour Government."

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November 23 The Duke of Edinburgh...
ST JAMES'S PALACE
November 23 The Prince of Wales...
His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales...
His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh...
KENSINGTON PALACE
November 23 The Duke of Gloucester...
BUCKINGHAM PALACE
November 23 The Duke of York...
His Royal Highness the Duke of York...
MUSICAL EVENING
Princess Alexandra, Vice-Patron of the Royal Over-Seas League...
RECEPTION
Carlton Club/United & Cecil Club
Lord Walker of Worcester, Chairman of the Carlton Club...



The actor Richard Wilson produces a rare smile as he climbs the Royal Court Theatre, Sloane Square, London, for a topping-out ceremony to mark the completion of the structure of the rebuilt theatre. Leading article, page 19.

Today's royal engagements

The Queen, accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh will open Parliament at 11.30. Princess Margaret will be present.
The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh will give a reception at Buckingham Palace for foreign Ambassadors, High Commissioners and members of their Missions...

Church news

The Rev Christopher Leffer, Rector, Trimley (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich) to retire February 23, 1999.
The Rev David Osborne, Team Vicar, Malvern Link, Worcester (Worcester) resigned July 31.
The Rev Stephen Parker, Assistant Curate, Harborne St Peter (Birmingham) resigned September 30.

Transport Research Foundation

The Transport Research Foundation is the owner of the UK's Transport Research Laboratory and has the support of eighty-three sector members including Universities, Professional Institutions, Consultants, the Transport Support Industry and Trade Associations...

Memorial service

His Honour Thomas Pigot, QC The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayor, accompanied by the Sheriffs and Mrs Harris, attended a service of thanksgiving for the late Thomas Pigot, QC...

Forthcoming marriages

Mr D.G. Brady and Miss E.P. Gavette The engagement is announced between David, elder son of the late Mr Brian Brady and of Mrs Sheila Brady...

Musical evening

Princess Alexandra, Vice-Patron of the Royal Over-Seas League, was the guest of honour at a Royal Over-Seas League musical evening held yesterday at Kensington Palace...

Reception

Carlton Club/United & Cecil Club Lord Walker of Worcester, Chairman of the Carlton Club, and Sir Marcus Fox, Chairman of the United & Cecil Club, were the hosts.

Today's birthdays

Viscount Alanbrooke, 66; Mr Peter M. Birse, chairman, Birse Group, 55; Mr David Baker, Chief Constable, West Mercia, 55; the Marquess of Blandford, 43; Mr Ian Bohannan, cricketer, 43; Mr Lynn Chadwick, sculptor, 84; Mr Billy Connolly, comedian, 56; Miss Beryl Cooper, 70; Mr Patric Dickinson, Richmond Herald of Arms, 48; Judge Elizabeth Fisher, 54; Mr P.J. Head, director of educational institutes, Further Education Funding Council for England, 47; Mr David Kosoff, actor and author, 79; General Sir Richard Lawson, 71; Mr E.A.M. MacAlpine, former Headmaster, Mill Hill School, 88; Sir Claus Moser, FBA, former Warden, Wadham College, Oxford, 76; Mr Charles Osborne, author, 71; Miss Vivien Saunders, golfer, 52; Mr Edward Stourton, broadcaster, 71; Mr Mark Taylor, director, Museums Association, 40; the Right Rev J.S. Temple, former Bishop of Malmesbury, 82; Mr Paul Thornburn, rugby player, 36.

Retirements and resignations

The Rev Russell Astworth, Vicar, Thornhill Lees (Wakefield) retired October 31.
The Rev Alistair Baile, Chaplain, Broadgreen Hospital (Liverpool) retired August 31.
The Rev Gavin Barker, Vicar, Southbourne St Christopher (Widnes) retired October 31.

Other appointments

Captain Paul Kinlock CA, Assistant Diocesan Evangelist (Blackburn) to be Area Evangelist, Halesowen (Worcester).
Mr Elizabeth McWhirter, to be RE and Spiritual Development Officer for the CofE Schools (Coventry).

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BIRTHS

ADOLEA - On November 18th at The Portland Hospital to Sophie and Niran Adolega, a beautiful girl named Keka, Popo and Delaja.
BOWRING - On 20th November 1998 to Alison (nee Wiseman) and Stephen Robert, a son Benjamin Stephen.

DEATHS

BROOK - Donald Guy, on November 19th 1998, aged 72 years. Husband of the late Mrs. Kathleen.
DANIEL - Peter Maxwell, FRCP, FRCS, former fellow of the College of Pathology and Psychiatry, died peacefully at home, November 19th, 1998, aged 82 years.
DEBBIE - Douglas, November 20th, suddenly of Leola, aged 88 years. Husband of Ellen and father of Elizabeth.
EYRE - See Wallace.

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THE TIMES OBITUARIES
A large vertical column of obituary notices, including names like Charles... and details of their lives and deaths.

Rodney Hobson on Business Link guidance to entrepreneurs on improving practices

Winner has gratitude of four firms he helped grow

ED BALDWIN, a member of the staff of Business Link Essex...

He was nominated by four of the small companies that he has helped in the past year...

Mr Baldwin helped Seco to install a robot-driven material handling system covering 14,500 sq ft of floor space...

At R&D Security, Mike Topping, a director, says: "He helped us to restructure our management, administration and accounts..."

"We are still regularly being surprised how much data we have and yet how little information. Ed has shown us that turning data into information is not difficult..."

The awards, first held in 1996 and reinstated this year, are sponsored by Barclays Bank with the support of the Department of Trade and Industry...

Typically, advisers will be helping about a dozen companies at any given time, visiting each at least once a month.

given time, visiting each at least once a month.

Mr Baldwin was one of ten regional finalists. There were also ten finalists in a category for advisers helping start-up companies...

Mr Warburton does not normally advise start-ups, but took on Zeta Plastic Components, the injection moulding company that nominated him for the award...

Although Business Link advisers are usually called in to help firms to expand, Mr Warburton says: "I have had to put the brakes on Zeta because it was growing too fast..."



Gavin Brooks, left, a Business Link adviser who helped Richard Meyrick to develop a business teaching the piano to City executives

Adviser's key role in piano venture

A PIANO teacher who set up in business giving lessons to City financial experts is among the long list of small companies that have sought advice from Business Link.

Richard Meyrick, concert pianist and proprietor of The Piano Studio, nominated Gavin Brooks, of Business Link London City Partners...

start his business "against very considerable odds".

In his own words, he is now "an international concert pianist let loose upon the rather sad pianistic endeavours of barristers, judges, bankers and stockbrokers".

Mr Meyrick says: "I knew nothing of the Business Link organisation and had only the vaguest notion that perhaps there was a lot of

money to be made from offering daytime piano lessons to City executives. I fully expected to be laughed out of court."

The main problem turned out to be acquiring suitable premises. Several leases fell through. Mr Brooks's encouragement through all the disappointments was crucial. When premises were finally secured last March, after an eight-

month search, Mr Brooks advised on lesson fees, pitching them higher than Mr Meyrick had intended. The higher prices proved realistic.

Mr Meyrick says: "After three months, I nearly doubled the income I usually receive from teaching the piano at home in Kent."

He originally forecast first-year profits of £20,000, but the actual turnout is likely to be £35,000.

Worry as smaller enterprises shun IT

By BRIAN COLLETT

SMALL businesses are still resisting warnings from the information technology industry that they risk losing sales by ignoring IT products...

A BT survey covering a cross-section of 550 firms divided them into four categories: techno-sceptics, which are reluctant to invest in IT; techno-pragmatics, which adopt IT gradually...

Techno-enthusiasts, young companies that believe that IT will give them a competitive edge; and the

techno-leaders, which use the latest products to improve efficiency.

The study found nearly half the sceptics lacked a full set of the electronic "essentials": telephones, faxes and personal computers.

Across the four categories, 69 per cent have mobile telephones, but few have the equipment to do office work on the move. Just 22 per cent have laptops, though the figure is 39 per cent in London.

The view that men are more at home with the technology than women is challenged by the study. The same proportion of men and women consider themselves able to

make full use of the technology.

One frightening revelation was that 17 per cent believed they would still be grappling with millennium compliance in five years' time.

UK companies are not alone in Europe in fighting shy of information technology, a report by Cisco Systems, the Internet networking provider, says. It claims that one in five small European companies has effectively rejected technology.

It seems that the country where most companies have some form of

computerisation is the Czech Republic. Attitudes in Britain and Germany are becoming polarised between technophiles and technophobes.

A quarter of UK companies and a third of German ones have rejected technological advances, yet both countries rival the Czechs in the number of enthusiasts.

Goran Strandberg, of Cisco, says: "There is a revolution going on in the business world today and, so far, many companies have failed to notice. They are missing out on major cost savings and losing opportunities for revenue generation

that this technology can offer. The polarisation between small companies in Europe is quite extreme. It is remarkable that as we move into the next millennium we still have businesses in Europe that have yet to buy a PC."

Obviously for businesses that can manage perfectly well without computers, it is clear from the Cisco report that large firms are putting increasing pressure on suppliers to enter the technological age.

Already more than a third of client companies now demand that suppliers on their approved list must use PCs and have Internet access.

BRIEFINGS

Tips on how to spot the warning signs of recession and how to survive the downturn are contained in a new book The Recession Buster's Handbook...

A free guide to the international mail order market has been produced by the Royal Mail. Copies from 0345 950950.

Only one in ten small businesses is insured against the owner or a key employee being unable to work for a long period, research by Lloyds TSB indicates.

Free seminars on the euro and year 2000 problems are being held at Centre Point, Central London, by the Focus training and enterprise council and Barclays Bank...

An initiative called Virtual Business Community, aimed at encouraging companies in the West of Scotland to use e-mail and electronic commerce, has been started by Glasgow Chamber of Commerce.

A technology centre set up by Aztec, the Tec for the London boroughs of Kingston, Wandsworth and Merton, will be available for renting by small businesses from January.



"Of course we care about the future of small business - we're about to become one!"

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INSIDE SECTION 2 TODAY



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ARTS The Spirit of Liverpool is one of culture PAGES 35-37



LAW Abused women and why their day is coming PAGES 39-41

TELEVISION AND RADIO Pages 50, 51

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 24 1998

Siebe swallows ailing BTR in £9bn merger



Unveiling the new BTR Siebe yesterday: Ian Strachan, deputy chairman, Lord Marshall of Knightsbridge, chairman, and Allen Yurko, chief executive

By CARL MORTSHED INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

BTR, the struggling engineering group that was once Britain's most feared conglomerate, has succumbed to a £9 billion merger proposal from Siebe.

The deal was hailed by Allen Yurko, Siebe's chief executive, as an opportunity to create a global leader in controls and automation with more than 10 per cent of the world market.

City analysts were shocked by the speed at which the deal was agreed, and speculated that rivals in the control and automation business, such as Emerson, GE, ABB or Siemens, might still mount a competing offer.

Others questioned whether a rival would risk mounting a bid with a huge goodwill premium and pointed to a fall in Siebe's rating post-merger.

Mr Yurko refused to speculate on what might happen to BTR's automotive division, the weak link in BTR's business and the odd one out in Siebe's control and automation strategy.

Deutsche plans \$8bn takeover of Bankers

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

DEUTSCHE BANK yesterday announced its intention to take over Bankers Trust for \$8.86 billion (£5.2 billion) to create the world's biggest financial services group.

Donaldson Lufkin Jenrette and Lehman Brothers each rose about 10 per cent. Bankers Trust's independence was recently undermined by its involvement in the \$3.6 billion bailout of Long Term Capital Management in September.

According to a statement, the two companies have completed due diligence investigations but have yet to agree on the final structure of the new group. Its combined assets will total \$850 billion, more than Citigroup, currently the world's top finance house.

With this acquisition, Deutsche fulfils its "American Dream" of being one of the top ten Wall Street finance houses. The German bank already has a New York base which will be integrated into Bankers Trust, America's eighth-biggest bank.

Rolf Breuer, Deutsche's chairman, said: "The proposed combination would create a truly compelling global financial services company. We are working diligently to finalise all terms and preparations for the Sunday meeting of our supervisory board."

It is Deutsche's strategy to challenge the top Wall Street houses in America to pick up the clients needed to defend business in Germany. Deutsche Bank was seen as the big loser in the flotation of Deutsche Telecom two years ago.

The news ignited trading in banking shares on Wall Street. Bankers Trust shares shot up from \$77 to \$87. Other likely takeover candidates also saw lively buying.

BUSINESS TODAY

Table with financial data including FTSE 100, Dow Jones, US Rate, and London Money.

Fall in house prices recorded

HOUSE prices fell for the first time in three years in the three months to the end of October, according to a survey published yesterday by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS).

Bonn to fight for duty-free

GERMANY'S new Government appears ready to join the fight to retain duty-free within the European Union (Matthew Barbour writes).

Yardley brands sold to Germany's Wella

THE brand name of Yardley, the royal perfumer, has fallen into German hands, having been sold to Wella, the hair care and cosmetics group.



tributed one quarter of the company's sales. Other Yardley fragrance brands, such as Tweed and Panache, remain unsold.

Price claim attacked by Dixons

SIR STANLEY KALMS, chairman of Dixons, yesterday described suggestions that the retailer is overcharging for personal computers as an "absurdity" and said that he would welcome an Office of Fair Trading inquiry as an opportunity to prove his case.

Pension funds act on corporate governance

TWO of the largest institutional investors in the US and UK yesterday said they were joining forces to keep a closer eye on corporate boardrooms.

work jointly over issues such as executive pay and pre-emption rights. "Stiffer corporate governance initiatives are on the way. The Americans are much more aggressive and much less patient," said Sarah Wilson, director of Manifest, a corporate governance consultancy.

Advertisement for John Charcol mortgage, featuring text: "You've never had it so good... since 1959, in fact, with this week's 5 year capped rate of just 5.99% (6.2% APR)."

Offers £1m hit contract errors

Yesterday revealed the group about £1 million in contract errors...

News advances

Newspapers in London yesterday revealed...

Passengers rise

Passenger numbers in the UK rose by 2.2% in the first nine months of 1998...

Shield shop plan

Shield's plan to open a new shop in London...

Rfabrica steady

Rfabrica's share price remains steady...

Ian Strachan is a whizz with the flip charts. Since he took over as chief executive in January 1996, he has detailed his strategy for the business to just about anyone who would listen...

Flip-charting BTR's transition



COMMENTARY by our City Editor

This may have explained why the part of his strategy that was best executed was the disposals of businesses, transactions that could be carried out in the relative comfort of banking offices around the world...

together with reassuring neatness and should genuinely be stronger to play in their global marketplace.

Corporate gadflies go global

Ever since CalPERS started building up its overseas holdings, the top US pension fund has been angling to export its activist shareholder methods...

Hermes looks more promising. The long-time manager of BT and Post Office pension funds has a similar investment focus. It likes to track indices rather than choose all its investments...

The new alliance is focused on boardroom matters rather than prodding underperforming managements, which has helped CalPERS to improve returns on its duller US holdings...

used to guarantee that US executives get rich - and equally powerless to do anything about them. One of the least desirable recent imports is the idea of rebasing prices of share options to bail directors out if the share price goes down...

Evidently, the deal between CalPERS and Hermes is meant to be the start of a worldwide trade union of institutional investors.

tors. But do not expect results fast, even in Anglo-Saxon countries. In the mid 1990s the Association Of British Insurers became an enthusiastic founder member of a new international corporate governance network including active US funds...

Listening out for a swansong at EMI

The rumours are hovering over EMI with the intensity of a flock of vultures. Like the beady-eyed birds, the gossips have spotted something vulnerable to attack. Shareholders in EMI may be wondering just who will be there to protect them should the aggressors decide to act...

worse than any dramatist could have portrayed and Sir Colin is said to have threatened resignation on several occasions. Such is his grip on the disastrous affairs of the ROI that the withdrawals of the threats are not greeted with universal applause and calls for curtain calls.

As those who have preceded him know, one of the difficulties at the Opera House is for the nominal boss to fend off the luminaries who believe themselves to have the right to run things. Strong, verging on ruthless, tactics are required. Given the profit warnings and share price, EMI might benefit from a similar determination at the top...

Duty-bound

IT SEEMS that Gerhard Schröder is determined to use Germany's presidency of the EU to campaign for an extension of the current duty-free regime. His motive is to preserve jobs, a driving principle of the new left-leaning Europe. However, while Mario Monti, the EU Competition Commissioner, claims to be unimpressed by the argument, he may yet have to succumb to the purely practical reason that the Brussels brains have still to dream up any remotely workable way of replacing the system.

Netscape in \$4bn merger talks with America Online

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

NETSCAPE and America Online yesterday confirmed they were negotiating the first megamerger between Internet companies.

Microsoft was quick to use the speculation surrounding the negotiations to its advantage in the antitrust trial that currently occupies the court.

has been struck yet. The anticipated transaction will take the form of a stock swap.

Salvesen to spend £100m

CHRISTIAN SALVESEN, the distribution group, has £100 million to spend on expansion and maintains acquisitive ambitions, despite its decision yesterday to hold the interim dividend at 2.45p.

lion earned in the first half of last year. However, Salvesen split off its engineering services side as a newly quoted firm called Aggreko in September 1997.

MacLaurin 'not for M&S'

LORD MACLAURIN of Knebworth, the former chairman of Tesco, has been approached by a headhunter about replacing Sir Richard Greenbury as chairman of Marks & Spencer.

from M&S, and had told the headhunter that he "would not consider" moving to the company.

Nationwide benefit vow as profits rise

THE Nationwide Building Society lifted pre-tax profits 20 per cent to £212.7 million in the half year to October 4 (Caroline Merrell writes).

The society said that it planned to hand back some more of its profits to members as mutual benefits. This year, it has returned about £150 million to them in lower mortgage rates and higher deposit rates.

Channel chairman facing revolt

BY MATTHEW BARBOUR

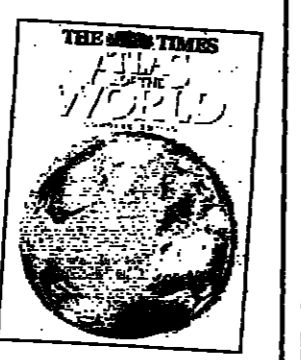
A FORMER chief executive of Channel Holdings, the troubled electronic security group, is urging shareholders to vote its chairman, Philip Ling, off the board at its annual meeting tomorrow.

Patrick Rogers, chief executive of the group between 1992 and 1996, said that "under Mr Ling's chairmanship the share-price has been reduced close to rubble".

Mr Ling was yesterday out of the country and unavailable for comment. However, Stewart Evans, chief executive at Channel since August, said the board will be unanimously backing Mr Ling's re-election.

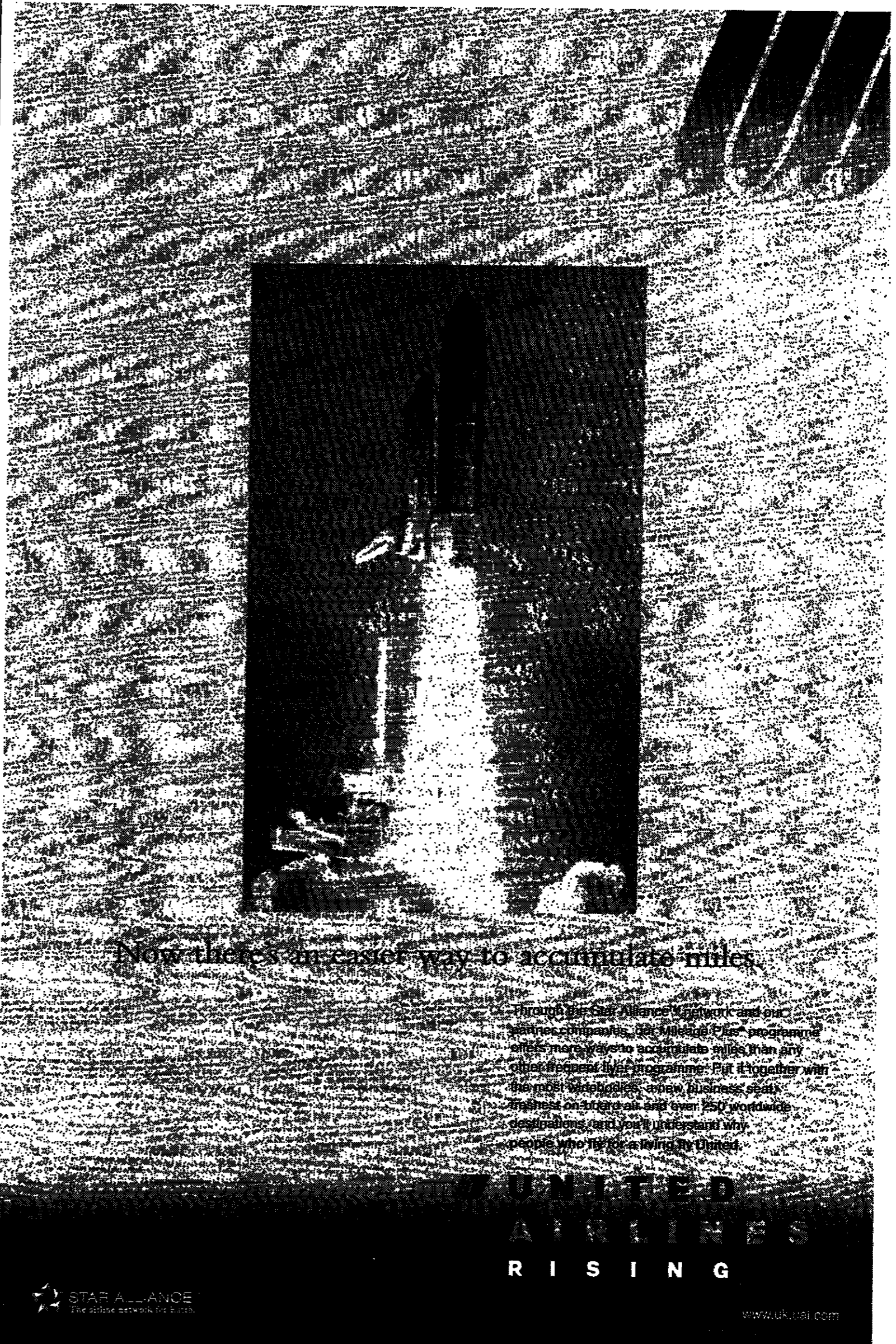
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RISING

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Boosey & Hawkes warning strikes dull chord in City

By CHRIS AYRES



Holland: tackling problems

SHARES in Boosey & Hawkes, the musical instrument maker and owner of the publishing rights to works by Richard Strauss, Rachmaninov and Stravinsky, fell 20 per cent to 337 1/2 yesterday following a profits warning.

The company — which only recently ended a threat to its independence by paying \$55 million (£33 million) for its largest shareholder — blamed its profits warning mainly on trading in the Far East. Shares in B&H fetched £10.07 in 1997.

Richard Holland, chief executive, said: "Trading has deteriorated further and has spread into other geographical markets, with a negative effect upon sales and margins."

He said B&H would tackle the problem through a £1 million rationalisation of production and distribution costs.

This will include the closure of B&H's Benelux instrument distribution company, the dis-

posal of its leasehold premises at Hendon in London, and the elimination of its third-party wholesaler in Switzerland.

Before these costs, the company said its pre-tax profits for 1998 were likely to be down 13 per cent on last year at just £7 million. This does not include one-off costs related to its shareholder reorganisation of £1.1 million.

Tempus, page 30

CAT signs up again with BASF

BASF Pharma, the drug development side of the German chemicals group, is in work with Cambridge Antibody Technology on a second antibody that could be used to treat rheumatoid arthritis.

In the year to September 30, CAT made a loss of £7 million (£8.4 million loss). Operating costs rose to £11.2 million (£8.3 million) as staff numbers increased to 150. CAT ended the year with £34.8 million cash.

PolyMASC deal
PolyMASC Pharmaceuticals is to receive an undisclosed payment from a licensing deal with Transkaryotic Therapies, a Nasdaq-listed genetic engineering company for the use of its polymer-linking technology.

Jacobs new horizon
Jacobs Holdings, the shipping, transportation and property group, has bought Horizon Holdings, a freight forwarder company, based in Bradford, for up to £22 million.

Cranwick buy
Cranwick, the food group, yesterday announced the acquisition of Cambury, the sausage-maker, for £3.5 million.

Bid battle looms as Tyco offers \$11.3bn for AMP

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

TYCO INTERNATIONAL, the US firefighting conglomerate, yesterday gave another boost to the resurgent merger mania with a \$11.3 billion (£6.88 billion) takeover bid for AMP, an electronics group.

AMP had been fending off a hostile bid from AlliedSignal worth \$10 billion, in spite of the shareholders' wishes.

AlliedSignal could now return with a higher offer and spark the first significant takeover battle for several months. The sharp fall in share prices in America is believed to have scuppered a number of big deals but, with stock markets now recovering, Wall Street is rediscovering a taste for mergers and takeovers.

This latest takeover deal is valued at \$51 per share, a 12 per cent premium. The combination creates a company with a market capitalisation of about \$54 billion, with annual revenues in excess of \$22 billion.

Dennis Kozlowski, executive chairman of Tyco, said: "We are bringing to Tyco the world's largest electronics

connector company with an exceptionally strong market position and the most respected brand name in the industry."

Bob Ripp, chairman and chief executive of AMP, will serve on Tyco's board and will continue as president of AMP.

AMP, with annual revenues of approximately \$5.5 billion, designs, manufactures and markets a broad range of electronic, electrical and electro-optic connection devices.

The merger is subject to the approval of both companies' shareholders and regulatory approval. The companies anticipate that the transaction will be completed in the first calendar quarter of 1999.

Tyco is the world's largest manufacturer and installer of fire protection systems, the largest provider of electronic security services and the largest manufacturer of flow control valves. It also has business in disposable medical products, plastics and adhesives, electrical and electronic components and underwater telecommunications systems.



Colin Prescott has C&W backing for his epic balloon trip

Up, up and away to some serious money

LATER this month, two men will clamber into a small capsule, the size of a child's bedroom, where they intend to spend up to three weeks attempting to fly around the world in a balloon.

The venture by Andy Elson and Colin Prescott is nothing new. We all know about Richard Branson and his rather unsuccessful attempts to achieve this great feat of endurance, as well as the rather more successful tilt by Steve Fossett, the American millionaire. Indeed, all in all, six teams are in a race to complete this strange and unusual task.

Three things, however, make Elson and Prescott's attempt different. The first is Elson. He is the holder of the world record for the longest continuous balloon flight — a little short of ten days in Breitling Orbiter last year.

The second is that Cable & Wireless, the telecoms group, is putting up the best part of £2 million to sponsor this attempt. This is a huge expenditure for what is essentially a classic example of stunt marketing — putting a company's name on a feat of endurance in expectation of gaining a large amount of media coverage.

Cable & Wireless will hope that the flight will generate enough "And finally..." spots on *News At Ten* (or *News at 6.30* and *11* as it soon will become) to make the expenditure worthwhile.

And finally, this is where Prescott comes in. He is the founder and chief executive of Flying Pictures, Britain's leading experts in stunt marketing. The company, founded 21 years ago, has notched up seven "And finally..." spots in the past ten years, as well as having clients featured on *ITV's Don't Try This At Home* and *You Bet*, the BBC's *Record Breakers* and many other television programmes on terrestrial and satellite TV, not to mention the front pages of *The Express*, *The Mail* on Sunday and this newspaper.

The business started after Prescott was taken on a balloon ride by an Afghan princess called Safai Taxi and realised that this was a good idea for ambient media because everybody was looking up at them. It moved on to balloon displays at county shows and sporting events, developed into TV with an advert for Tango and along the way ended up working on a series of feature films including *Mission Impossible*, *Saving Private Ryan* and a host of Bond movies. The client list includes J Sainsbury, Coca-Cola, Jaguar Cars, Lurpak, Unipart, Mercier, the champagne house, the city of Vienna and Fox Broadcasting.

Along the way, stunt marketing has evolved into a finely tuned art form. Cable & Wireless's investment in the balloon race (which is quite a bit less than Virgin boss's obsession) is a bit of a howitzer approach. According to Lucius Pearte, who, in addition to being the son of the founder of the Ann Summers chain of sex shops, is also a co-director of Flying Pictures, the ideal stunt marketing project is more of a sniper shot, where for expenditure of a few thousand pounds, the client can obtain media coverage worth ten times as much.



JASON NISSE

MARKET LEADER

Up till now, the company's biggest project has been Coca-Cola's "Right Choice Tour", in which two balloons flew through the Middle East promoting the drink. In addition to piloting the first balloons to be allowed across Saudi Arabian air space and performing the world's highest trapeze act, the team also staged the world's highest tightrope walk at Luxor in Egypt. This was filmed by WTM, the international news agency, and ended up on more than 130 television channels around the world. Not a bad return on Coke's £500,000 investment.

However, most marketers spend much less than that. For instance, the Merrier bubbles balloon — which was an "And finally..." cost just £20,000. For a little bit more, Flying Pictures can virtually guarantee a spot on television with something like a water-skiing or abseiling stunt. Flying Pictures not only sets up the stunt, it films and photographs it with its own film crew and will then provide a ready-made package for a TV programme or a newspaper for a fraction of what it would cost the programme to make it.

"To be honest it is getting easier and easier to place things on TV," says Pearte. "There's more tabloid television being made and tighter budgets to make these shows."

In addition, Flying Pictures can ensure that stunts take place without member of the public being endangered — a major issue. However, Flying Pictures has to be sure that the stunt attempted is bona fide — ideally something that might be included in the *Guinness Book of Records* — and will not breach Independent Television Commission guidelines on coverage of sponsored events. This often involves detailed discussions with the ITC, but, as yet, Flying Pictures has not had any stunt kicked off the screens.

After all, there is no point setting up a marketing stunt if there is no media to report it.

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Prudential	3	£15,807
Wesleyan	4	£15,622
Gen. Accident	5	£15,231
Legal & Gen.	6	£15,181
Axa	7	£15,180
Sun Life	7	£15,180
Equitable Life	9	£14,693
Royal London	10	£14,272

Based on original investment of £10,000 after 5 years. Figures from Money Management October 1998. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance.

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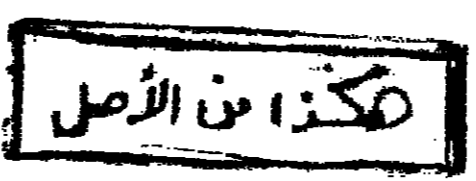
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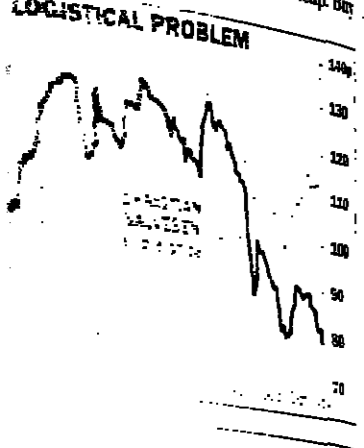
*Figures relate to cash in value as at 1st July 1998, for a male at exact age 45 at outset. Figures are on an offer to offer basis. Britannic figure for 5 years to 1st October 1998 is £16,497.
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...from higher claim...
...premiums. The...
...insurance is flat...
...of AXA and All...
...the U.K. general inv...
...But both...
...make a play for...
...the price of a...
...other, less a...



LOGICAL PROBLEM

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Table listing various alcoholic beverage stocks with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

BANKS

Table listing various bank stocks with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

Table listing various brewery, pub, and restaurant stocks with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

Table listing various diversified industrial stocks with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

ELECTRICITY

Table listing various electricity utility stocks with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

BUILDING MATERIALS

Table listing various building materials stocks with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

CHEMICALS

Table listing various chemical stocks with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

CONSTRUCTION

Table listing various construction stocks with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

DISTRIBUTORS

Table listing various distributor stocks with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

FOOD MANUFACTURERS

Table listing various food manufacturer stocks with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

HEALTHCARE

Table listing various healthcare stocks with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

HOUSEHOLD GOODS & TEXT

Table listing various household goods and textile stocks with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

INSURANCE

Table listing various insurance stocks with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

ENGINEERING

Table listing various engineering stocks with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

Table listing various investment trusts with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

SHORTS (under 5 years)

Table listing various short-term interest rates with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)

Table listing various medium-term interest rates with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

LONGS (over 15 years)

Table listing various long-term interest rates with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

Equities continue to surge

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous days close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

Main table of equity prices listing various stocks across multiple sectors including ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, BANKS, BREWERIES, Pubs & REST, DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS, ELECTRICITY, BUILDING MATERIALS, CHEMICALS, CONSTRUCTION, DISTRIBUTORS, FOOD MANUFACTURERS, HEALTHCARE, HOUSEHOLD GOODS & TEXT, INSURANCE, ENGINEERING, INVESTMENT TRUSTS, SHORTS, MEDIUMS, and LONGS.

LEISURE & HOTELS

Table listing various leisure and hotel stocks with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

MEDIA

Table listing various media stocks with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

PHARMACEUTICALS

Table listing various pharmaceutical stocks with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

INDEX-LINKED on projected inflation of 5%

Table listing index-linked securities with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

UNBUNDLED

Table listing unbundled securities with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Table listing various support services stocks with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

PRINTING & PAPER

Table listing various printing and paper stocks with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

PROPERTY

Table listing various property stocks with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Table listing various telecommunications stocks with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

TRANSPORT

Table listing various transport stocks with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

WATER

Table listing various water utility stocks with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

RETAILERS - FOOD

Table listing various food retailers stocks with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

RETAILERS - GENERAL

Table listing various general retailers stocks with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

Table listing various alternative investment market stocks with columns for High, Low, Company, Price, and % Change.

Advertisement for IWC (International Watch Company) featuring a watch image and text: 'Why many people will try for a pilots licence this year. Why few will get one. IWC watches available from £100. Internet: http://www.iwc.ch'

Table of unit trust prices for various categories including Asia Growth, Asia Income, Asia Bond, and Asia Dividend. Columns include fund name, price, and change.

Table of unit trust prices for various categories including Global Growth, Global Income, Global Bond, and Global Dividend. Columns include fund name, price, and change.

Table of unit trust prices for various categories including UK Growth, UK Income, UK Bond, and UK Dividend. Columns include fund name, price, and change.

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LISTINGS

Nunn directs Pinter

ARTS

MUSIC Huddersfield premieres

Fine Peake-time viewing

RECOMMENDED TODAY

LONDON RETRYAL: Pinter's profound analysis of adultery among friends... BALLET FRANKFURT: As part of a series of cultural events to mark the President of Germany's 10th visit...



Philip Glass gives a talk at the Belfast Festival

NEW WEST END SHOWS

Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre showing in London HOUSE FULL, returns only... THE BEST OF TIMES: The Bridwell Theatre's programme of early modern songs...

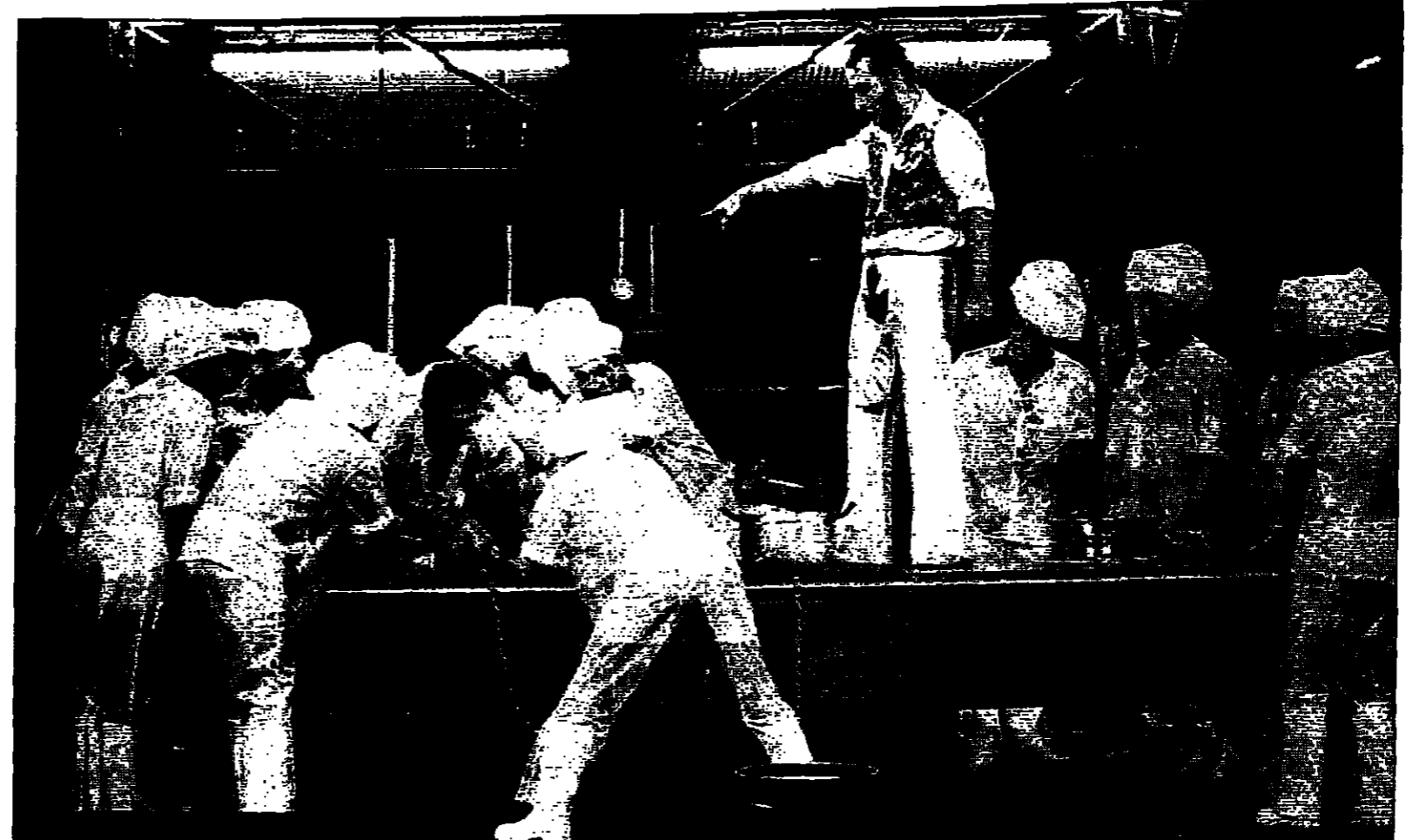
FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE

ANGEL SHARPS (18): Hectic, fiery French film about teenage romances... DEAD MAN'S CURVE (18): Derivative horror comedy-thriller, with some smart dialogue...

There is often a perfectly simple moral to be drawn from even the most complex operatic action. After four days of Wagner's Ring it is 'don't tease dwarfs'...

OPERA

rogue the domestic staff. It is energetic and graphically cranked by the head cook Swelter that drives the kitchenboy Steeprike to plot...



Rocky horror show: Steeprike (Stefan Vinzberg, crouching) and Swelter (Markus Heinrich) in Irmin Schmidt's opera, loosely based on Mervyn Peake

indeed, it was a surprise to find Peake's swasty Dickensian grotesque, Swelter, sung by a smart rock star (Markus Heinrich). Steeprike is mainly rock, in a virtuosic performance by Stefan Vinzberg, whooping up above the stage in what might be described as 'chest-voice' falsetto...

Faded by comparison

The essential Simon Holt - whose 40th birthday year coincides with the 21st Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival - is contained in his turbulent and yet supremely coherent Capriccio Spettrale...

CONCERTS

by Capriccio Spettrale, proved to be an uneasy comparison also with the Holt of today. It is true that the new Holt score, although written specifically for Rolf Hind, is not a piano concerto...

prevailing calm, lucidly expressed though it is. The title of the piano piece actually comes from The Nightingale to Blame, and the music does seem to relate to that work in some immaterial way...

Good night, Vienna

Mahler's monumental song-symphony, Das Lied von der Erde, is not the rarity it once was. It appears with regularity in the London concert diary, but with depressing and almost equal regularity performances fall short in one department or another...

Good night, Vienna

loneliness and unrequited love with heartbreaking eloquence. This farewell to life and love is quintessentially Viennese, in spite of the fact that it was inspired by Ancient Chinese poetry and written after Mahler had left Vienna behind...

Once again it was plain just how fortunate the Philharmonia is to have this great musician as its principal conductor, with both deep musical wisdom and one of the most impressive techniques in the business...

OPERA & BALLET

COLUMBIA 071 460 8000 (10) BRITISH NATIONAL OPERA... THE BARNES OPERA SOCIETY

THEATRES

ADOLPH 071 301 3444 (10) GILBERT & Sullivan... THE BARNES OPERA SOCIETY

TOM CONTI in a comedy about fathers everywhere

THEATRES

ALHAMBRA 071 406 0000 (10) THE WINDS OF WESTWARD... WHISTLE DOWN THE WIND

THEATRES

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THE TIMES... GALLERIES... Bourgeois... What a tangled web we weave... VISUAL ART: Richard Co...

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GALLERIES
 Bourgeois' bitter visions

ARTS

TOMORROW
 Digital video explained

What a tangled web she weaves

VISUAL ART: Richard Cork ponders the spiders and spectres that haunt Louise Bourgeois' Serpentine show



Louise Bourgeois with her *Articulated Lair*, left; and, right, her 1996 *Spider IV*: the trauma of childhood betrayal seems profoundly to have affected her vision as an artist

Now in her late eighties, Louise Bourgeois shows no sign of lapsing into a harmless dotage. The more years she accumulates, the more agitated she becomes. Her recent work at the Serpentine Gallery is fuelled by rage, depondency, yearning, mockery and dread. Looking forward, she abhors the prospect of extinction. Looking back, she rails at the pain of childhood memories. Although autobiographical concerns feed everything produced by this indomitable woman, she always manages to widen her work out. *Spider*, the most spectacular exhibit, may have originated in feelings about the benevolence of her mother. But as it rears like a science-fiction phantasm high above our heads, the outsize insect takes on an imaginative life of its own. Menacing and protective, the spider is ensconced on a

mesh' cage. Glassy, egg-like forms are slung beneath her, and she seems bent on nurturing them. At the same time, though, the legs sprouting from her head look eminently prepared to strike. And the fragments of bone tied to the mesh look at first like macabre traces of the spider's victims. Inside the cage, a room with faded furniture does nothing to combat the ominous mood. Bourgeois' parents ran a tapestry workshop in Paris, and the torn fabric lodged in the mesh bears witness to her mother's skill. On one level the tapestry sums up the positive side of her girlhood. But the scraps shown here look melancholy as well. They are bound up with Bourgeois' feelings about her father, who had a decade-long affair with the family's English governess. Even today Bourgeois still feels intensely about this double betrayal, perpetrated by adults who had once com-

manded her love and loyalty. The trauma profoundly affected her vision as an artist, and goes a long way towards accounting for the desolation of the room within the cage. In this context, bones can be seen as the wan remnants of a family relationship shattered and consigned to a premature grave. Elsewhere, however, they assume a broader meaning. In an untitled work made two years ago, larger bones are slung on hooks projecting like branches from an upright steel rod. Each bone acts, in turn, as a makeshift hanger for a garment. Vintage dresses salvaged by Bourgeois from old chests and cupboards are suspended here, redolent of the interwar period when the artist's parents bought her clothing by Chanel and Poiret. They tried to rival each other by dressing her up, so that she became, in Bourgeois' sardonic phrase, a "bone of contention". Hence the sadness suffusing all these garments, and confirmed by the hissing words stamped on the base of the sculpture. "Seamstress Mistress Distress Stress" runs the inscription, amounting to a litany of anger at the deception that undermined Bourgeois' adolescent life. But there is a more universal significance. Bourgeois establishes a stark opposition between her vanished youth and the imminence of death. As a *memento mori*, it has a nightmarish ferocity. The steel rod might easily begin to revolve, turning the entire work into a merry-go-round of rasping, medieval intensity. Her readiness to confront the unavoidability of death makes Bourgeois seem close to today's young artists. Her influence has surely been greater than anyone suspects, and it is made all the more pervasive by her fascination with the power of found objects. In another untitled work, also from 1996, she relies for the largest form on the sawn-off stump of a real tree. Hanging by a ring from a metal branch, it looks like a misshapen corpse left to rot on a wayside gallows. But she is not a literal artist. The forms dangling from other sections of the sculpture are less identifiable: a sewn-up garment bulging with breast-like protuber-



AROUND THE GALLERIES

AT FIRST the dates come as a slight surprise: of course the Maas Gallery is showing British pictures, but from 1840 to 1940? Though the gallery does show living artists they are all of a traditional inclination, and otherwise Maas is known almost exclusively for the splendours of its Victorian stock. But the current show makes some unexpectedly cogent points.

It is mostly a matter of continuity. What would attract a gallery specialising in 19th-century art to venture so far into the 20th? To judge by this show, the fact that Victorian tastes and Victorian standards of workmanship did not come to a sudden stop faced with Picasso's epoch-making *Les Femmes d'Alger* in 1907. Especially perhaps in Britain, traditional approaches to figurative art survived relatively unscathed right up to the Second World War. There were Modernists too of course, but the British talent for compromise meant that the two streams could flow happily side by side, and there is nothing in Dorothy Webster Hawkesley's exquisite *Women Sewing* or Henry Albert Payne's study for *The End of the Day* (1934) which need puzzle anyone who could understand, say, George Dunlop Leslie's *Faith* (1858). Nor does that mean that as individual artistic expressions, the two later paintings are any less valid. And the funny thing is that some of the most striking pieces in the show, such as George Price Boyer's *Newcastle from the Rabbit Bank* or Joseph Arthur Severn's *A Steamer at Sunset*, could date from any year of the century. *15a Clifford Street, W1 (0171-734 2302), Mon-Fri 10am-5.30pm, until Dec 18*

FROM the amazing feast of Asian art suddenly laid before the London public for a brief special season in nearly 50 galleries and six major public spaces, it is difficult, and perhaps invidious, to select. But the show of Japanese prints, *Images from the Floating World*, at Barry Davies Oriental Art deserves a special word. Graced with a catalogue larger and more splendidly illustrated than many freestanding books on the subject, it extends from early users of the coloured woodblock medium such as Hishikawa Mo-

ronobu (1618-95) to moderns like Ito Shinsui (1898-1972).

Again, the message is continuity. Of course styles change and develop, and are taken off in unpredictable and highly personal directions by great artists like Hokusai, Hiroshige and Yoshitoshi, but the underlying idea remains coherent and consistent throughout, whether we are looking one more time at Mount Fuji, investigating the life of the classic Japanese theatre, or taking in a tennis match over the heads of the Western-dressed spectators. Also, the art of the Japanese woodblock is taken whole: even the most explicit sexual images are not segregated here.

Barry Davies Oriental Art, 1 Davies Street, W1 (0171-408 0207), Mon-Fri 10am-6pm, until Dec 4

Gay Reddon is one of those artists who manage, through the years (in his case more than 50), to cut their own path quietly and confidently through the tangles of 20th-century art, taking from others what they can usefully transform to their own ends and leaving the rest to one side. From Reddon's work one could calculate without prompting that he must have spent a lot of time in France, and have looked closely at Matisse and Bonnard. He has also travelled extensively to North Africa and around the Mediterranean, bringing back lively notations of his travels. He is an appreciator, clearly, of sunshine and shade, food and drink, the Good Life in general. And yet there is an odd melancholy about many of the works in the small retrospective at Pierris Festham.

Often the scene is a shadowy interior, or a restricted view out of a window, all clearly defined by railings or banisters. The rooms are always empty: the windows nearly always give on to enclosed spaces with no sign of human life, or not more than one would expect to see mid-siesta. There is a grace and mystery about the paintings which belie their straightforward, non-nonsense surface. *427 Fulham Road, SW6 (0171-381 5958), Tues-Fri 10am-1pm, 2-6pm, Sat 10am-1pm, until Dec 5*

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CHANGING TIMES

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'Much of her work can be seen as a litany of anger'

But there is a more universal significance. Bourgeois establishes a stark opposition between her vanished youth and the imminence of death. As a *memento mori*, it has a nightmarish ferocity. The steel rod might easily begin to revolve, turning the entire work into a merry-go-round of rasping, medieval intensity. Her readiness to confront the unavoidability of death makes Bourgeois seem close to today's young artists. Her influence has surely been greater than anyone suspects, and it is made all the more pervasive by her fascination with the power of found objects. In another untitled work, also from 1996, she relies for the largest form on the sawn-off stump of a real tree. Hanging by a ring from a metal branch, it looks like a misshapen corpse left to rot on a wayside gallows. But she is not a literal artist. The forms dangling from other sections of the sculpture are less identifiable: a sewn-up garment bulging with breast-like protuber-

Louise Bourgeois is at the Serpentine Gallery (0171-238 1522) until Jan 10, sponsored by BMW Financial Services Group

LAW

Let's get together and work outside the law

Mediation, funded by legal aid, saves money, say Andrew Lockley and Nick Armstrong

The growth of mediation has been one of the most significant developments in English civil justice in recent years. The requirement that two parties, a dispute and a neutral third party able to help the parties to identify areas of possible agreement.

Last month one of the last obstacles to the development of mediation was removed. After a successful legal challenge by the law firm Irwin Mitchell, the Legal Aid Board decided to start funding mediation. The case that gave rise to Irwin Mitchell's challenge was a dispute between its client, Nigel Wilkinson, an accountant from Barnsley, and his firm, which dismissed Mr Wilkinson from the practice without adequate compensation. Mr Wilkinson was entitled to legal aid with a financial contribution because his income suffered a drastic cut.



Out of court: clients are empowered by the more informal processes of mediation, giving them a greater role

A novel look back in anger?

VERONICA LOWE is planning a comeback. Remember her? She was the figure every solicitor loved to hate during her controversial tenure as head of the much reviled Solicitors' Complaints Bureau. After repeated clashes with Martin Mears, then Law Society President, she left to head up the Valuation Office Agency. She hit the headlines again when she left the agency with a £54,000 pay-off, having spent seven months of her 18 months there on sick leave. Now she is planning to make a name in a different field. She is writing a novel. Though she is keeping the subject under wraps, staff at the Law Society believe she will be unable to resist the temptation to draw on her experiences there.

Legal DIARY

PROSECUTORS at the Crown Prosecution Service are reporting an easing of tension since the arrival of the new Director of Public Prosecutions, David Calvert-Smith. QC. Staff there are already comparing him to the last but one DPP, the easygoing and much liked Allan Green, QC. The new DPP has many of his qualities. "The new DPP has many of his qualities," says one prosecutor. "Without, we think, necessarily all his proclivities." Calvert-Smith's departure has meant the appointment of a new chairman of the influ-

ential Criminal Bar Association: Brian Barker, QC. Barker follows in the steps of his wife, Anne Rafferty, QC, who held the post from 1995 to 1997.

THE Law Society is in the midst of yet another attempt to revamp itself, guided by the management guru Sir Denis Stevenson, the chairman of Pearson. His recommendation that Chancery Lane should run itself like a successful business has struck a chord with many members of the Law Society's Council. There is, however, one aspect of this analogy that has failed to impress Michael Mathews, the Law Society President. He was horrified when he came across an internal paper which sug-

RENEE CALDER against her. In announcing the settlement of the libel action, leading counsel for Ms Calder said that the parties had agreed that it was an opportune moment to record that a wasted costs order against Ms Calder in 1992 had been overturned by the Court of Appeal in 1994, thereby vindicating Ms Calder.

Stewart & Francis



Abuse at home still haunts us

Urika Jonsson, Sheryl Gascoigne, Pannah Fawcett and Pamela Anderson - all victims of abuse from their partners - may not be aware that tomorrow is International Day Against Violence Towards Women. But the attacks on them have emphasised that such abuse is global.

The Government's paper *Supporting Families* showed that domestic attacks are the most common violent crime against women; one in nine is subject to severe beatings by her partner, it says. Other sources put the figure at one in five. In 1996 almost half of female homicide victims were killed by their partners. Many regions now have domestic violence units. But often women see the police as a male-dominated service, which may deter women - those from ethnic minorities, in particular - from reporting crimes.



CHRIS BARTON

Police practices of "no-criming" and "down-criming" domestic abuse mean that if a woman complains to the police, she may face an unenviable choice: refuse to give evidence and be punished by her partner. For many women, refuges provide the only escape route. Yet there are only about 400 in England, half the number recommended by the Government in 1975. This year more than 22,000 women and 32,000 children resorted to using refuges.

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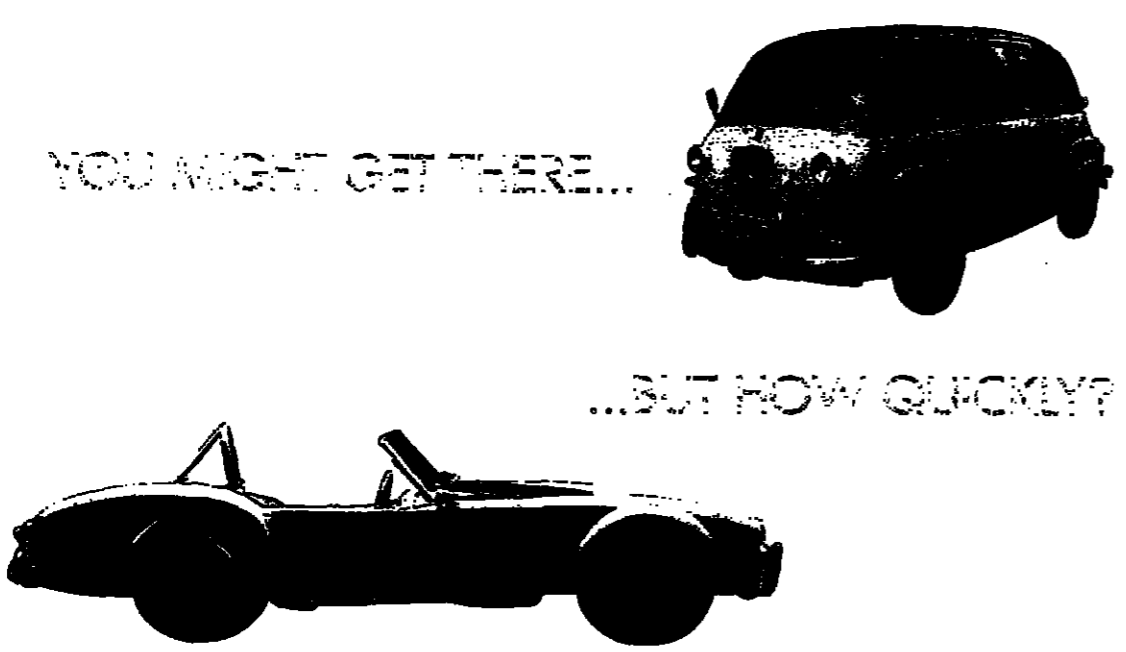
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LITTLETON CHAMBERS

The members of Chambers congratulate Michael Burton QC on his appointment as a High Court Judge, wish him well and thank him for his very successful 7 years service as Head of Chambers. We are pleased to announce that Michel Kallipetis QC has accepted the members' invitation to succeed Michael as Head of Chambers.

- Dale Martin and Niran De Silva have joined chambers at the conclusion of their pupillages.
- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Michel Kallipetis QC | Daniel Serota QC | Ian Mayes QC |
| Richard Price OBE QC | Clive Freedman QC | Andrew Clarke QC |
| John Bowers QC | Colin Manning | Richard Perkoff |
| Philip Bartle | Mark Lomas | Timothy Higginson |
| Caroline Harry Thomas | John Davies | Shirley Bothroyd |
| Selwyn Bloch | Anthony Sendall | Ian Gatt |
| Michael Duggan | Peter Trepte | Paul Lowenstein |
| Raoul Downey | Martyn Barklem | Charles Samek |
| Jeffrey Bacon | Jeremy Lewis | Naomi Ellenbogen |
| Daniel Tatton-Brown | Victoria Bather | Stuart Ritchie |
| Carol Davis | Dale Martin | Niran De Silva |

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CRICKET: TOURISTS FACE SURVIVAL BATTLE AS AUSTRALIA TAKE CHARGE IN FIRST TEST

England exposed by McGrath

FROM ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT, IN BRISBANE

BRISBANE (fourth day of five): England, with all second-innings wickets in hand, need 322 runs to beat Australia... THE risks that England accepted in their team selection for the first Test were brutally uncovered yesterday.



McGrath dismisses Gough leg-before, his first victim in a spell of three wickets in six balls

51-minute stay. It ended when Kasprowicz slid an inswinger between bat and pad and preceded a carnival for McGrath, who mopped up the remaining three wickets in six balls.

SCOREBOARD FROM BRISBANE

Table with 4 columns: Team, Innings, Runs, Wickets. It shows scores for Australia (1st and 2nd innings) and England (1st and 2nd innings), including individual player statistics.

Putting the houses in order

Back to the Floor BBC2, 9.00pm

When Heather Rabatts became chief executive of the London Borough of Lambeth it was said to be the toughest job in local government.

Cutting Edge: Street Patrol Channel 4, 9.00pm

We do not see any criminals being apprehended in Lorraine Charler's documentary about Neighbourhood Watch but she has unearthed a couple of characters that any film-maker would kill for.

Moderna Times: The Magic Factory BBC2, 9.30pm

It must be hard to make a documentary about Alton Towers that is neither a promo nor a hatchet job.

Good Evening Ma'am Radio 2, 9.00pm

There is a hideous fascination about the Royal Variety Performance which is amply conveyed here, if only incidentally.

Radio 1 (BBC)

5.00am Zoe Ball 6.00 Simon Mayo 7.00 News 7.15 Off The Shelf: One of Ours...

Radio 2 (BBC)

6.00am Sarah Kennedy 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan 8.30 Ken Bruce 12.00 John Inverdale...

Radio 5 Live (BBC)

5.00am Morning Reports 6.00 Breakfast with Julian Worricker and Victoria Derbyshire...

Virgin

6.00am Chris Evans 9.30 Russ Williams 1.00pm Nick Abbott 4.00am Hamlet Scott...

Talk Radio

5.00am Bill Overton 6.00 The Breakfast Show 9.00 Scott Colby 1.00pm Tony Blackburn...

Radio 3

6.00am On Air with Stephanie Hughes. Includes Mussorgsky (Night on a Bare Mountain)...

Radio 4

5.30am (LW) Test Match Special Australia v England. The conclusion of the first Test in Brisbane...

5.30 (FM) World News 5.35 (FM) Shipping 5.40 (FM) Weather Forecast 5.45 (FM) Prayer for the Day...

1.00 The World at One Presented by Nick Clarke 1.30 Full Orchestra New series...

2.00 The Archers (r) 2.15 Afternoon Play: In Care Leone Edey's drama about a streetwise teenager...

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. RADIO 2. FM 88.0-90.2. RADIO 3. FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4. FM 82.4-94.6...

Advertisement for 'THE BILL' featuring a large black and white photo of a man in a uniform. Text includes 'DID 180 GRANDS' WORTH OF JEWELLERY BEND A STRAIGHT COP?' and 'TV FROM THE HEART'.

Advertisement for 'iTV' featuring a logo and the text 'TONIGHT 8.00pm'. It also includes a list of answers from page 49.

Answers from page 49: EPERGE (c) A recent term for a decorative stand supporting a large (usually cut glass) dish...

Advertisement for 'MAKOVETS' featuring a logo and the text 'SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE'. It includes a chessboard diagram and a puzzle.

Advertisement for 'MAKOVETS' featuring a logo and the text 'MAKOVETS (a) A society of artists and writers founded in Moscow in 1921. DIAPIR (b) A geological dome or artificial fold...'

Large vertical advertisement on the right side of the page. It features a large 'What' logo at the top and contains various promotional text and graphics.

SPORT

TENNIS 48

Agassi's injury raises Hanover hope for Rusedski



RUGBY UNION 47

Dallaglio ready to revive flagging England



Striker may follow Hodgson

Sutton set to spur Ewood Park exodus

By OLIVER HOLT, FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT, AND STEPHEN WOOD

BLACKBURN Rovers may be forced to start counting the cost of their indecent haste in dispensing with Roy Hodgson sooner than they expected after it emerged last night that the contract of Chris Sutton, their leading player, is inextricably linked to the continuing presence of the manager who they have just dismissed.

options as Nicolas Anelka and Dennis Bergkamp struggle to provide them with the goals they need to sustain the defence of their title.

ship with Roy Hodgson and things like this are never easy, but if there is a decision to be made, I will make it. My message to the fans now is: 'I will do my very best to get the best manager in the business.' I will do whatever it takes.

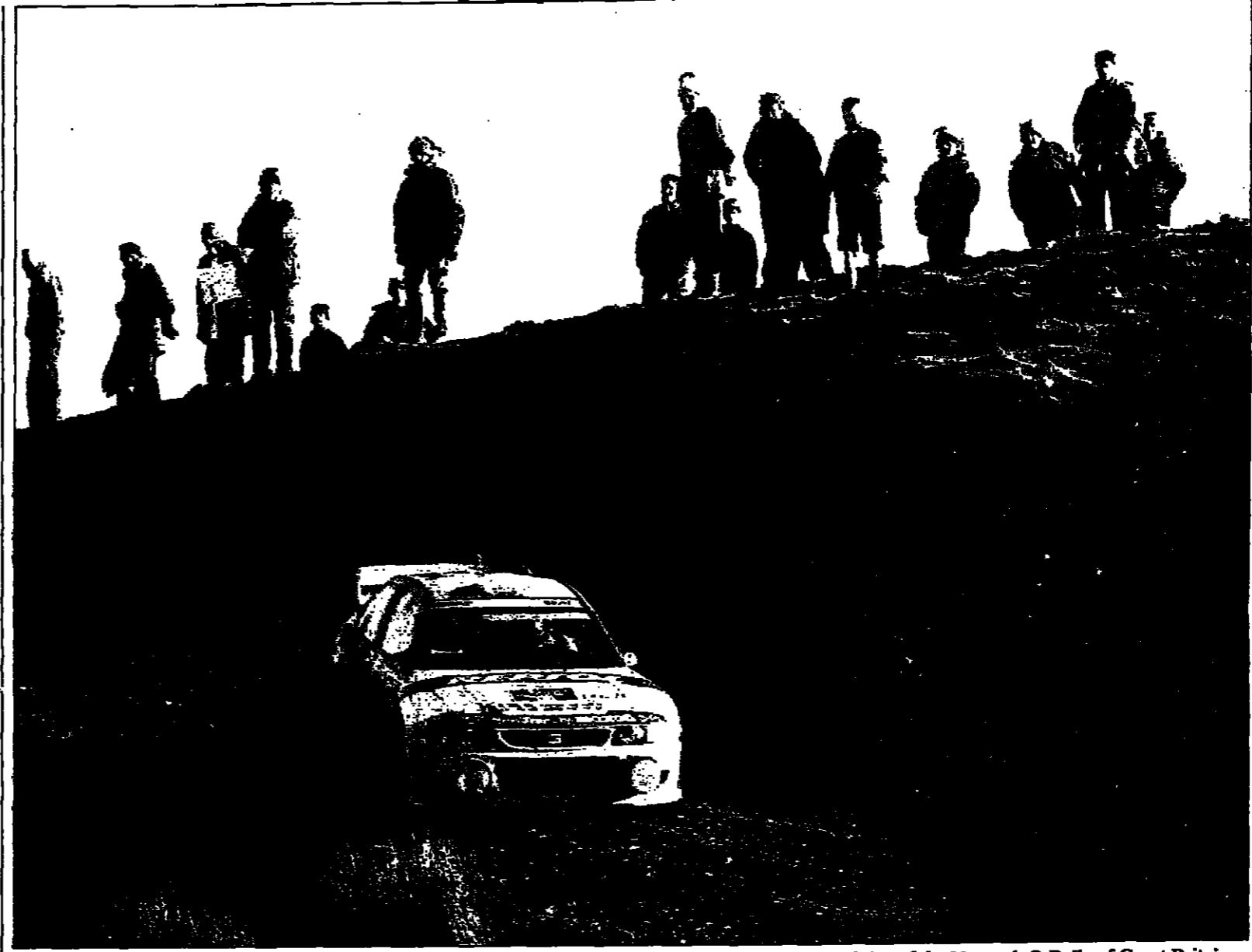


Sutton: contract clause

Chris Sutton, the centre forward, who was the joint-top goalscorer in the FA Carling Premiership last season, was so impressed with Hodgson's management that he insisted on a clause in the new five-year contract that he negotiated last season. It states that the striker, who cost £5 million when Kenny Dalglish bought him from Norwich City five years ago, would be allowed to leave in the event of Hodgson's departure.

open the floodgates at Ewood Park. Tim Sherwood, the club captain, has been openly agitating for a move for some time and, if they go, other leading players, such as Tim Flowers and Kevin Gallacher, are likely to become unsettled, too.

"When we appoint the new manager, he will have my assurance that there will be money available to strengthen the squad. Whatever it takes to get us away from the bottom of the table, I will do."



Gwynndaf Evans, of Wales, has an appreciative audience as he drives his Team Seat during the second day of the Network Q Rally of Great Britain

McRae signs off in cloud of smoke

By KEVIN EASON

COLIN McRAE flung the door of his Subaru wide and tore off his helmet to cock an ear at the noise of metal grating against metal. It was the sound of his engine disintegrating and the signal that victory in the Network Q Rally of Great Britain was not to be.

onship in 1995, before moving to Ford on a £6 million contract. His challenge for the world championship ended in Australia earlier this month with a mechanical failure and now his rally on home soil had finished with another breakdown. "I don't know what we have done to deserve this," he said.



Burns, the leader, takes a break during a service stop

Cruel failure is clearly to be the hallmark of this last rally of the world championship season and McRae was the latest victim. The Scot had led from the start at 7.20am on Sunday morning, over tarmac, gravel and mud and yesterday he flew through the forests of Wales, building up a 13sec lead over Richard Burns, his nearest rival.

There was at least one beneficiary of the mayhem at the top of the leader board. Tommi Makinen, Carlos Sainz's chief rival for the world championship, was eliminated within hours of the start on Sunday and yesterday saw another barrier, in the shape of McRae, removed. Sainz has only to finish fourth to erase

rally, into a potential podium position in third. Any support that Sainz might have expected from Didier Auriol, his Toyota team-mate, evaporated on the final stage last night when the Frenchman dropped out with suspected clutch failure.

For Burns, 27, victory would be confirmation of his arrival as a true contender in world rallying. He was disappointed that the fight with McRae, the elder, was over but still anticipated a tough climax. "As events have shown in the past two days, anything can happen," he said.

STANDINGS

LEADING POSITIONS (after 21 stages): 1. Burns (GB, Mitsubishi Lancer) 2hr 13min 41.25sec; 2. A McRae (GB, Subaru Impreza) at 1 min 15.5sec; 3. J Kankkunen (Fin, Ford Escort) at 1:46.1; 4. C Sainz (Sp, Toyota Corolla) at 2:01.7; 5. B They (Bel, Ford Escort) at 3:01.1; 6. G de Mevius (Bel, Subaru Impreza) at 4:26.7; 7. S Lundholm (Fin, Ford Escort) at 4:38.6; 8. A Schwarz (Ger, Ford Escort) at 6:08.3; 9. K Holowczync (Pol, Subaru Impreza) at 6:23.5; 10. H Rovinsky (Fin, SEAT) at 6:47.1

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD

Crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1-21 and the text 'No 1571'.

- ACROSS: 4 Sootsayer (5), 7 Impractically idealistic (8), 8 Water creature: metal plate (4), 9 Suicide (pilot) (8), 10 Rugged, solid (6), 13 Elephant driver (6), 14 Complaining, parrot noise (6), 15 Highest point (6), 18 Pass, move across (8), 19 Look stiffen, alluring (4), 20 Large bottle (8), 21 Beneficiary of cheque (5)

- SOLUTION TO NO 1570: ACROSS: 1 Plotter 5 Abet 9 Roche 10 Venture 11 Manslaughter 12 Cedars 13 Stream 16 Dutch courage 19 Cabinet 1 20 Aware 21 Lays 22 Clined DOWN: 1 Fort 2 Orchard 3 Treasure hunt 4 Reveal 6 Brant 7 Theorem 8 Knight errant 12 Codicil 14 England 15 Poetic 17 Tabby 18 Dell

THE TIMES BOOKSHOP advertisement with details on book orders.

Slater salutes English tutors

FROM PAT GIBSON IN BRISBANE

IT WAS enough to make any Pom whinge as, at the Gabba yesterday, Michael Slater joined the long line of overseas players who have put England to the sword in a Test match and then said how much they have benefited from playing county cricket.

On another day when the England players failed to do what they are supposed to do week-in, week-out for their counties and again betrayed their upbringing, Slater could not speak too highly of the experience that he had gained from playing for Derbyshire last season.

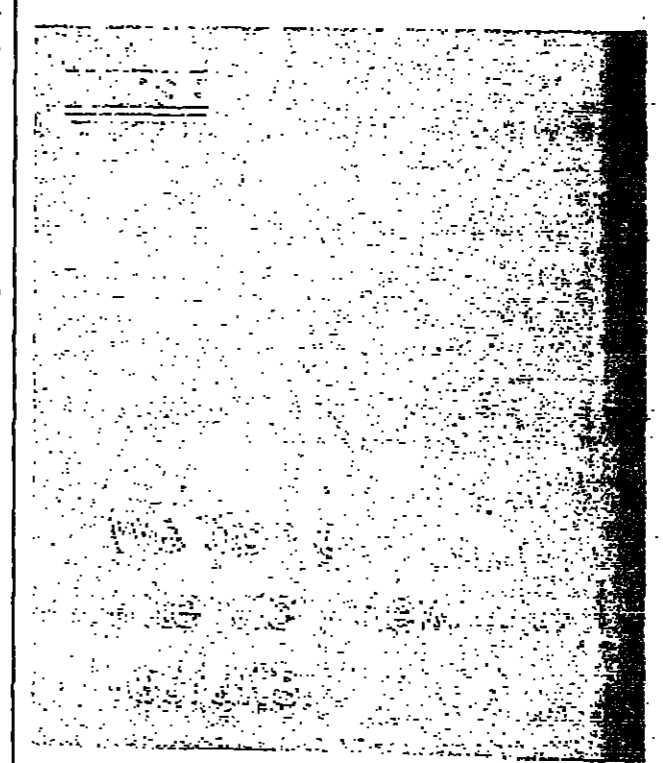
It did not look as though Slater had too much to learn from English cricket when he scored a century in his first Test at Lord's in 1993, celebrating memorably by kissing the Australian badge on his helmet. He went on to score three more hundreds in the 1994-95 Ashes series, but then it all went wrong for him. He was dropped by Australia in 1996 for a perceived lack of discipline after getting out to a particularly crass shot in a one-off Test in India and was left out of five consecutive series, including the last Ashes series, in England in 1997.



Slater shows his delight after reaching his century

ment. I just enjoyed the whole scene over there." He was enjoying the scene in Brisbane as well after his swashbuckling century had enabled Mark Taylor, his captain, to make the most challenging of declarations, but his smile was matched by that of Glenn McGrath, who laid waste to the England lower order with a spell of five for 19 and then revealed one of the secrets of his success.

More important, however, is the basic technique of one of the world's great fast bowlers, who is now talking about following the example of Slater and playing in county cricket. Many people, England cricketers among them, will argue that we should not allow them the privilege. More to the point, we should be asking ourselves why our players cannot be more like them, valuing the benefits and learning from the experience.



We just look at their OVs.

Advertisement for Sun Computers, featuring text about investment decisions and contact information.

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Large vertical advertisement on the right edge of the page, including 'Passi' and 'Cheering breaks tradition of silence'.